Parties under pressure

Explaining choices made by parties in the wake of heavy electoral defeat

Cover design:
Roald van Hoof, grafisch vormgever.

Typesetting:
Martijn van Nijnanten using LyX and LaTeX.

Printing:
Print Service Ede

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Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van

de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,

op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof. mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,

volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties

te verdedigen donderdag 12 september 2019

klokke 16:15

door

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geboren te Leiden in 1991.

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1 Parties under pressure: introduction

1.1 Introduction

That parties are under pressure is not a new theme in political science. Since the 1980s, there has been a lively debate over whether or not political parties as a form of political organisation are in crisis.[1] Certainly, the challenges faced by political parties are increasing: electoral volatility has risen, membership numbers have declined and they are challenged by the rise of competitors who claim to stand in opposition to "old" party politics. These central institutions of many democracies find themselves put under increasing stress. Though the electoral challenges parties are faced with are not new, they are increasing in number. At almost every election, one or more parties will find themselves with severe losses of votes, seats or both.

And yet, parties have persisted. Their capacity to do so is related in the literature to their capacity for *change*, allowing them to adapt to the circumstances.[2] It is this way of reacting to a changing political reality that is the subject of this dissertation. The central question it aims to answer is as follows: *how do political parties respond to an external shock in the form of heavy electoral defeat, and why do different parties respond in different ways?* In seeking to answer this question, this dissertation can be placed in a broader literature on party change which sees party change as the result of external shocks: dramatic events resulting from a change in the external environment, forcing the party to change.[3] The theories in this broader literature on party change following external shock, however, do not provide the conceptual and theoretical tools needed to analyse parties put under pressure by heavy electoral defeat and distinguish between various ways in which parties change as a result. This thesis takes a new institutionalist approach in which internal characteristics such as a party's relationship to its electoral base and its ideological commitments as well as external factors such as the impact of electoral systems play important roles. In doing so, it aims to contribute to the literature by starting to construct the required framework, and in doing so further political science's understanding of the antecedents of party change in general.

1. E.g. K. Lawson and P. H. Merkl, eds., *When Parties Fail: Emerging Alternative Organisations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); H. Daalder, "A Crisis of Party?," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 15, no. 4 (1992): 269–288; P. Mair, *Party System Change: Approaches and Interpretations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

2. E.g. Mair, *Party System Change*, 89.

3. E.g. A. Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power*, trans. from the Italian by M. Silver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1982]); R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 259–287.

This introductory chapter introduces the research puzzle in more detail. Section 1.2 outlines the research puzzle and presents an argument for its theoretical relevance, arguing that the current literature pays insufficient systematic attention to this phenomenon. It also looks ahead to a more detailed discussion of the literature later in this dissertation in briefly considering why this might be the case. The main focus of section 1.3 shall be to discuss the rise in electoral volatility that has occurred in Western democracies. In particular, it will be argued that heavy electoral defeat is becoming a routine feature of parliamentary elections, presenting the study's societal relevance. Finally, section 1.4 presents an overview of the contents of this dissertation.

1.2 The puzzle: the black box of party change

The study of party change is a subset of a larger field of theoretical development in the social sciences, focusing on organisational and institutional change. A central characteristic that the social sciences accord to institutions and organisations is a certain permanence: they become imbued with value that extends beyond their original instrumental purpose and makes their survival a goal onto itself. This was also one of the early insights in the literature on political parties. Michels, in his classic study on political parties, notes the way in which political organisations displace their earlier idealistic goals with simple endeavour for the survival of the organisation itself.[4]

Looking at parties this way, it is easy to see how change itself becomes a target for explanation. If political parties are institutions and their chief aim is survival, then how is it that their programme, ideology, organisation and strategy changes over time? The literature has taken two different approaches to explain this. The first, most numerous category of studies views change as the result of gradual changes in the external environment, progressing more or less through a succession of party types.[5] The second school is concerned with sharp, marked external shocks which cause parties to change.[6]

Both bodies of literature suffer from a similar problem: the same process of party change takes different forms in different circumstances. In other words: the process between the changes in the environment that cause party change and the ultimate party change involves many intervening steps, which can explain why most parties change due to these factors, but not all of them to the same extent and in the same way. In a manner of speaking often employed in situations with a similar problem: there is a black box over the intervening causal process between the causes and the outcome of the process, which

4. R. Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, trans. from the German by E. Paul and C. Paul (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1978 [1915]), 373.

5. E.g. M. Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. from the French by B. North and R. North (London: Methuen, 1954 [1951]), 63; O. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. J. LaPalombara and M. Weiner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 185; R. S. Katz and P. Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: the Emergence of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995): 8; A. Krouwel, "Otto Kirchheimer and the Catch-All Party," *West European Politics* 26, no. 2 (2003): 23–40; A. Krouwel, *Party Transformations in European Democracies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 5.

6. E.g. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 242; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 265.

is hard for researchers to look in on.[7]

And yet, without opening the black box, the party change literature will keep struggling with the problem of expressing such a complex causal relationship too simply. In the literature on the evolution of party types, the tendency to overgeneralise and declare one party type dominant without regard to diversity across parties and party system has often been diagnosed.[8] Expectations of dominant party types have more often than not failed to materialise. The 'external shocks literature' suffers from a related issue: here, theory gets stuck at the stage of demonstrating a link between an external shock and change,[9] but often fails to take account of the various different forms that belong to this same category of change. In both cases, it is the same problem underlying these issues: the black box of party change, obscuring the complex causal interplay that links its antecedents to its outcome.

The case study, with its qualitative focus and ability to look in detail at causal processes, is the method *par excellence* to deal with the black box. And it has, in the literature on external shocks in particular, spawned a rich tradition of single-case studies employing the same model.[10] Yet in all these case studies, it is rarely acknowledged that the party change explained in the one is of a different kind than the party change discussed in the other. Without acknowledging this diversity of outcomes within the overall category of party change, the black box cannot be fully opened to understand why party change occurs in different forms in different circumstances. In other words: in one set of circumstances, some changes can be present and some absent, and in others this may be exactly the other way round. A framework needs to be developed to understand the different varieties of party change and why one occurs in one party and another in another.

This is the main research puzzle this dissertation is intended to address. It is situated within the literature on external shocks because the sharp environmental changes producing party change offer the greatest potential to observe the workings of party change up close, but there is nothing to suggest that a similar reasoning, once refined, cannot also be applied to the more 'gradualist' literature. Within the broader literature on party change, this dissertation focuses on electoral shocks for various reasons. First, there seems to be general agreement that electoral defeat is a form of external shock.[11] Second, unlike other forms of shock, it is easily observed, since the results of elections are public.

In this way, this chapter arrives at a two-part research question, both parts of which can ultimately be traced back to solving the research puzzle of the black box. The first

7. W. C. Müller, "Inside the Black Box: A Confrontation of Party Executive Behaviour and Theories of Party Organizational Change," *Party Politics* 3, no. 3 (1997): 295.

8. R. A. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 2, no. 4 (1996): 508; R. A. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij: Veranderende Partijorganisatie in Nederland 1960-1990* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1992), 406-407; A. Krouwel, "The Catch-All Party in Western Europe, 1945-1990: A Study in Arrested Development" (PhD diss., Free University of Amsterdam, 1999), 204.

9. R. Harmel et al., "Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change: An Empirical Analysis," *West European Politics* 18, no. 1 (1995): 1–33.

10. E.g. Müller, "Inside the Black Box"; F. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats During 'Purple Hague', 1994-8," *Party Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 69–87.

11. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 243; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 281.

part concerns the need to acknowledge and map out in a structured way the diversity of outcomes within the category of party change: *how do political parties respond to an external shock in the form of heavy electoral defeat?* This is a prerequisite of furthering the research agenda on party change. So far, case studies have each taken a different view of party change, allowing them to explain the outcome in one case but not necessarily to extrapolate them to others. To do so, a comparative small-N study with a single conceptual and heuristic toolbox is needed. The second part of the research question, and the most important one, deals directly with the complex causal process linking an electoral defeat and party change: *why do different political parties respond in different ways?* Having observed that certain parties respond to these sharp changes in the environment in different ways, the question is why.

Formulating an answer to the first part of the research question requires the development of a new conceptual vocabulary and a heuristic model that can function as a starting point for theory-building. Since the existing models in the literature on shocks and change are only intended to explain the occurrence and extent of change, a new model is needed to get at the factors causing the several varieties of change. The focus on electoral shocks helps formulate this model in terms of the goal of the process: electoral recovery. Necessarily of course, this new model should then be tested on multiple cases in a qualitative way, so as to examine whether it can actually help to explain the presence or absence of certain types of changes in various cases.

In this way, the discussion naturally arrives at the second part of the research question. Previous case studies have, as noted above, often suffered from the problem of focusing too much on the idiosyncrasies of each case rather than on a general understanding and explanation of the phenomenon of party change itself. The best way to try to remedy this is a comparative small-N research design. By combining the detailed focused comparison of the case study method with a comparative design intended to account for the various differences across cases, the model can be put to a first test and further refined into a full theoretical model.

Addressing this problem can contribute knowledge to broader fields of the literature than just the focus on party change following electoral shocks. The literature on the evolution of party types suffers from a similar problem of presuming too easily (and too often wrongly) that certain developments observed will eventually lead to a new dominant party type emerging across different environments.[12] The difference between the two fields of study is not that large, since the same type of causes occur in both, being changes in the external environment in which parties operate. Once a framework has been developed to explain different outcomes after external shocks, some of the factors that are part of it can potentially also be applied to more gradual environmental changes. By starting with the marked changes produced by external shocks, it might be possible to explain the variation in more subtle and gradual changes as well.

The potential theoretical contribution can be broadened even further. It has been noted briefly in section 1.1 above that political parties have had a number of obituaries in the literature, each of which was subsequently proven wrong by their surprising resilience.

12. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?," 508; Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 406-407; Krouwel, "The Catch-All Party in Western Europe, 1945-1990," 204.

A useful idea about this resilience is that this is the result of the capacity of political parties to adapt to changing circumstances.[13] By looking at what happens when parties are put under pressure, we can also learn something about the way this capacity to adapt exists on the individual party level. In doing so, a deeper understanding of party change in parties under pressure also contributes to a deeper understanding of political parties themselves and the way in which they adapt to various changes in the social environment.

1.3 Increasing volatility, increasing pressure

The relevance of the research puzzle is not just a matter of furthering the research agenda on party change – it might also be an issue of societal importance. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, parties nowadays appear to face increasing challenges, mainly as a result of electoral volatility. These pressures result from the oft-observed process of partisan de-alignment in many Western democracies: party identification, which has for long been a defining influence on electoral behaviour, is declining among the electorate. Parties are faced not only with decreasing memberships[14] and the entry of new competitors[15], but above all by an increasing instability in their shares of the vote, born from a decline in the number of voters who would more or less automatically vote for them.

The consequence of this is that heavy electoral defeat is more common today than it has been in the past. This can, first and foremost, be seen in the levels of electoral volatility in Western Europe. Although Bartolini and Mair found that on average, volatility was still lower than in the 'freezing' inter-war period,[16] Mair also noted in 1992 that several European democracies were experiencing increased volatility.[17] Emmanuele and Chiaramonte found two decades later that 'unstable' elections have occurred disproportionately in recent years, increasing from one third pre-1991 to half of the cases after that year.[18] In addition, they note that strings of these elections have occurred in eleven different Western European democracies, most of them in this period.[19]

To further illustrate this, figure 1.1 displays the number of electoral defeats that can be qualified as heavy defeats in European countries.[20] As a rule of thumb, a loss of at least one third of a party's previous votes and/or seats was considered a heavy electoral defeat. This same rule of thumb will be employed later on in this dissertation to delineate the universe of cases of heavy electoral defeat, and will be justified in chapter four. For

13. See Mair, *Party System Change*, 89.

14. P. Mair and I. van Biezen, "Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies, 1980-2000," *Party Politics* 7, no. 1 (2001): 5–21.

15. R. Harmel and J. D. Robertson, "Formation and Success of New Parties: A Cross-National Analysis," *International Political Science Review* 6, no. 4 (1985): 501–523; B. Meguid, *Party Competition Between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

16. S. Bartolini and P. Mair, *Identity, Competition and Electoral Availability* (1990), 120.

17. Mair, *Party System Change*, 81.

18. V. Emmanuele and A. Chiaramonte, "Party system volatility, regeneration and de-institutionalization in Western Europe (1945-2015)," *Party Politics* 23, no. 4 (2017): 382.

19. Ibid., 384.

20. Only parties which had been present in the previous legislature were considered. This is a necessary restriction to make, since the disadvantage of having to meet an electoral threshold that has not been met before makes the vote of non-represented parties subject to more fluctuations of its own.

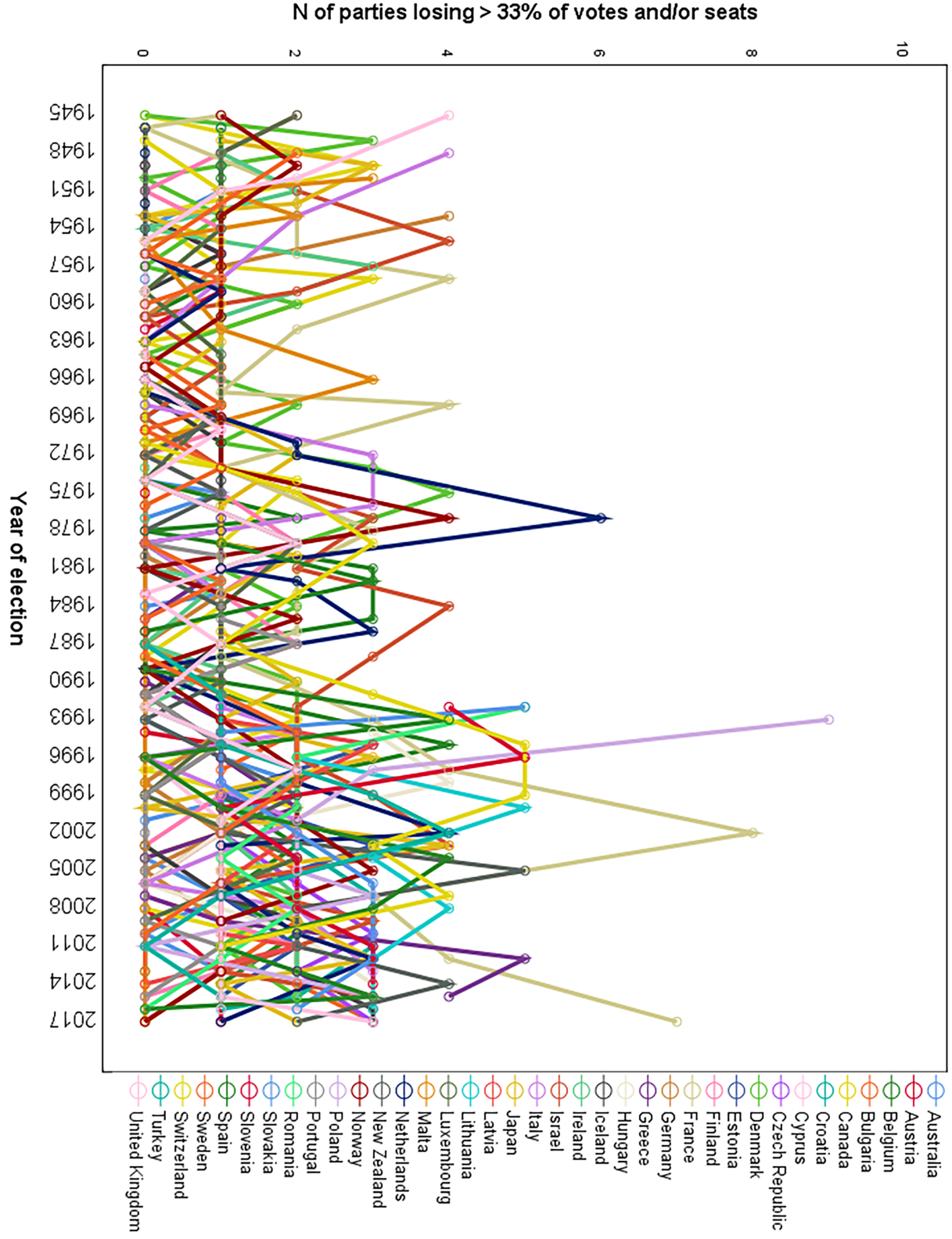


Figure 1.1: Number of parties losing more than 33% of their votes or seats, 1945-2017

now, it suffices to say that it is a significant enough loss to seriously damage a party's future electoral potential should the party not take serious action to address the crisis. In Britain and the Netherlands, the two countries under study in this dissertation, not an election has been held since the 1990s without a party losing heavily in this way. Indeed, this is the case for much if not all of Europe. Even where there is no party at all that suffers a loss of this magnitude at an election, this is more often the exception rather than the rule. Interestingly, the graph suggests that in most post-communist countries, this kind of instability of party vote and seat shares appears to be structural.

The societal relevance of this study now becomes clear: political parties, a vital part of many democratic systems, are under increasing electoral pressure. Past studies have provided ample evidence for the popular wisdom that parties are forced to change by electoral defeat of a certain magnitude. Yet to understand the ways in which parties will develop in the future under these challenging circumstances, a more detailed consideration of party change following heavy electoral defeat is needed. It is not enough to know that parties change as a result of a heavy electoral defeat, though it is certainly comforting to know that the popular wisdom in this case is correct. In order to say anything meaningful about the impact this increasing pressure will have on political parties, the debate needs to go further than that, considering the different ways in which parties can develop.

Opening up the black box is therefore not just a matter of theoretical importance; it contributes to a vital and ongoing debate about the continuing relevance and changing practices of political parties. By informing thinking about the way in which parties act and change themselves when put under pressure, the future of these important actors in our democratic systems may be put in sharper focus. By relating important developments such as the differentiation of party membership[21], the extension of the franchise in leadership elections to registered supporters and the downplaying of ideology[22] to the environmental challenges faced by each party, the future of these important actors in our democratic systems may be put in sharper focus.

1.4 Contents of this dissertation

This chapter has set out the research puzzle to be addressed in this dissertation. In the following chapters of this dissertation, the approach broadly outlined above will be expanded upon. Chapter two contains a review of the literature on political parties in general and party change in particular. In particular, it further explores the problem of the black box in the 'party shocks literature' and goes into more detail, arguing the need for a new theoretical model of party shocks and party change. Developing a new model alongside heuristic tools and the conceptual vocabulary required is the focus of the third chapter of this dissertation. Two strategies are derived from the ultimate need to compensate for the loss of electoral potential after an electoral shock: the reinforcement strategy, bringing the party closer to its roots in order to reach out to those supporters

21. E.g. S. E. Scarrow, *Multi-Speed Membership Parties: Evidence and Implications*, 2014, Paper prepared for "Contemporary Meanings of Party Membership", ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Salamanca, Spain, April 10-15, 2014.

22. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," 190.

that deserted it and those like them; and the extension strategy, broadening the party's base with measures that often move away from its roots. The argument that will be presented in this chapter with regard to the two strategies is that internal institutional characteristics of each party, particularly their attachment to their electoral base and their ideology, and external factors such as the electoral system, combine to influence the choice of strategy and the ultimate form of party change. It concludes by presenting a number of testable propositions. Having formulated these, this dissertation continues in chapter four by operationalising the major variables and outlining a comparative research design consisting of four parties which have suffered a crisis in the past to test these propositions.

The main body of this dissertation consists of five empirical chapters. Using evidence from the archival records of each party, chapters five through eight present an in-depth account of the response of each of the four parties up to two electoral cycles following a heavy electoral defeat, structured along the lines of the model. After discussing the Dutch Christian Democratic Appeal's response to its 1994 defeat in chapter five and the British Labour Party's transformation between 1983 and 1992 in chapter six, the analysis will turn towards the Netherlands' Democrats 66 between 1982 and 1989. Finally, the British Liberal Party's recovery process between 1970 and 1974 will be discussed. Each of these chapters attempt to explain the course each of these parties have taken in crisis. The evidence from these cases is then combined and synthesised in chapter nine. Through this comparative analysis, each of the propositions formulated in chapter three will then be put to the test, allowing judgment of the performance of the model. In chapter ten, finally, the overall conclusions of this dissertation will be formulated and suggestions made for future research.

The common thread that may be found running through all the chapters of this dissertation, binding them together, is how indebted political parties are to their history. Where previous entries into the 'shocks literature' cast the process of change as a power struggle, the image that emerges from this study is that it is more than that: it is also a continuous conversation with the party's own past. Through a process of path-dependency, the way in which the party's social base and its ideology have been viewed in the past very much affects the party at the new critical juncture that is initiated by the electoral crisis. In practice, veering away from this past is difficult even in such a challenging situation. This is the major argument of this dissertation: a party under pressure is forced to show its true colours. It has to (re)consider the basic essentials of its existence: what is the party and who is it for? As it will be shown, it is these questions that structure the debate on the path to electoral recovery, rather than more rational and functionalist considerations, such as the identity of the defectors.

2 Parties and party change: state of the field

2.1 Introduction

The evolution of political parties is one of the most expansive subject areas in the body of political science literature. This is no wonder: in a modern context, political parties form one of the essential parts of democratic systems. With their important functions for elite recruitment, structuring public opinion and formulating policy, political parties play an essential role in modern democracies. It is therefore no surprise that since the rise of mass political parties, political scientists have sought to understand the way in which this vital democratic institution develops. They found that as the nature of modern democracy changed, political parties were likely to adapt and change with the times, giving rise to an entire literature on party change.[1]

The aim of this chapter is twofold and unfolds roughly in this order. First, it seeks to give an outline and overview of the general literature on political parties as it developed, specifically the literature on party change. Second, it seeks to make clear the position and relevance of the current study to the debate. With regard to this second aim, the argument that will be presented is that debate on party change following external shocks has more or less arrived at a stalemate, since the prevailing theories are not equipped to go into the specifics of what can and cannot be expected to change. Therefore, it will be argued towards the end of this chapter that a new theory of party change following electoral shocks is required to resolve these problems.

This chapter starts by defining the population, quickly sketching three aspects of political parties which together make up the way political parties are understood in this study (section 2.2). The chapter then moves on to a discussion of party change in general (section 2.3). This section identifies two major bodies of the literature on party change – one on gradual party change, the other on party change induced by external shocks -, highlighting some common characteristics and problems associated with the party change literature as a whole. These two bodies of literature shall be discussed separately in sections 2.4 and 2.5. It will then be argued, in conclusion (section 2.6) why a new model of party change following external shocks, specifically electoral shocks, is needed to further our insight into why some parties develop in certain directions and other parties in others.

1. E.g. M. Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. from the French by B. North and R. North (London: Methuen, 1954 [1951]); R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 259–287; R. S. Katz and P. Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: the Emergence of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995): 5–28.

2.2 Parties

Though there is now general agreement that "democracy has become unthinkable save in terms of political parties"[2], there is considerably less agreement on what exactly a political party is. The debate on the proper definition of political parties will not be rehashed here, since it only serves to delineate the population to which this study applies.[3] However, for the sake of clarity, this dissertation employs the minimum definition of parties as developed by Sartori: "a party is any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or nonfree), candidates for public office."[4] As Sartori notes, such a definition is best suited to the purpose of delineating the class of objects we are talking about.[5] It should be emphasised that this is its only purpose: parties do more than just participating at elections, but it is only the participation at elections that defines all parties and sets them apart from other organisations.[6]

Since this definition considers any official organisation that competes at elections under a common label with a fair chance of securing a seat a party, it nicely suits our study, which is after all concerned with the effects of electoral competition on parties. To delineate the population with which this study is concerned, therefore, it is more than sufficient. However, this study is also concerned with party change, specifically changes to a party's essential character and operations. Since parties do much more than run candidates for election, the minimal definition does not suffice for this purpose. Following Von Beyme, we propose to resolve this by referring to party functions, or what parties do, in addition to what they are.[7]

These functions should be seen as somewhat broader than simply electoral. It is true that all parties have in common an effort to place candidates in public office, but they also have different essential functions and characteristics which if changed would undoubtedly constitute meaningful party change. Here broader functional definitions of parties can help, such as the one given by Von Beyme which identifies four functions: a programmatical or ideological function, an interest aggregation function, a mobilization or socialization function and an elite recruitment or government formation function.[8] These also fit counterparts in the American literature, such as the one given by Chambers: "nominating; electioneering; shaping opinion; mediating among groups, "brokerage", or finding formulas of agreement; managing government; and supplying connections between the branches of government".[9] From these functions and the minimal definition, four essential characteristics of any particular party can be distilled: its organisation, electoral strategy,

2. As famously expressed in E. E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New York: Holt, Rinehart / Winston, 1942).

3. See for example G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 58-64.

4. Ibid., 63.

5. Ibid., 64.

6. Ibid.

7. K. Von Beyme, *Politische Parteien in westlichen Demokratien* (München: Piper, 1984), 25.

8. Ibid.

9. W.N. Chambers, *Political Parties in a New Nation: The American Experience, 1776-1809* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 45.

its ideological or policy programme and the personal composition of its elite and of the slate of candidates it seeks to place in office. These four essential characteristics, while not determining the extent of the population, do serve to define a way of looking at the essentials of parties.

A last consideration that will be explored further below in our discussion of party change is that this study sees parties not just as organisations but as institutions. Rather than just organised forms of behaviour, parties are organised forms of behaviour imbued with value. This has been present since some of the earliest contributions to the literature: Michels observed a related process of goal displacement.[10] As the organizational needs of a party forced it to organize to obtain its original goals, eventually the organization itself would become more important than these goals.[11] According to Michels, this led to the displacement of the original goal of socialist parties in overthrowing capitalism with the mere survival of the party itself. This argument offers an important insight into political parties: their survival becomes a priority in and of itself since their existence is valued by their adherents.

2.3 Party change in general

This dissertation is mainly concerned with how parties change. Parties have changed a great deal between their origins in the 19th century and the present day. It is not surprising, therefore, that the literature on political parties has considered issues of party change even before the term itself was attached to it. Some of the most influential works in the general literature on political parties, without using the phrase, concern themselves with issues of party change. This is because of their focus on the evolution and development of political parties as a class of organisations, seeking to explain why parties at any particular time were constituted as they were and predicting how they would develop further. Any comprehensive treatment of political parties must unavoidably address how parties have shaped up over time.[12]

The early literature on the historical development of parties naturally developed into works that focused on gradual party change. These works highlight the evolutionary character of party change, stipulating that parties adapt gradually to changes in their environment. It is characterised in large part by focusing on the notion of party types pioneered by Duverger, with various types of parties succeeding each other over the course of history.[13] This body of literature on gradual change will be discussed in more detail in section 2.4 below. A more recent body of literature makes a different argument, arguing that party change is the result of external shocks. These short, sharp shocks of environmental pressure force a break in the normal resistance of parties to change. This part of

10. R. Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, trans. from the German by E. Paul and C. Paul (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1978 [1915]), 373.

11. Michels, *Political Parties*, 373; see also M. Ostrogorski, *La Démocratie et les Partis Politiques* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1912), 642.

12. E.g. Ostrogorski, *La Démocratie et les Partis Politiques*; Michels, *Political Parties*; Duverger, *Political Parties*; Von Beyme, *Politische Parteien in westlichen Demokratien*; L. D. Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1967).

13. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 63.

the literature is comparatively smaller, and will be the subject of section 2.5 below.

Before moving on to detailed discussion of these two different bodies of literature, section 2.3.1. through 2.3.3. shall discuss various characteristics and problems common to the entire field of party change. A first commonality is that both bodies of literature have a similar view about the origins of party change. In both parts of the literature, factors external to the party are involved in causing the party to change. In the gradualist body of literature, this takes the form of the evolving structure of society. An example is the use of universal suffrage to explain the rise of the mass party type.[14] External shocks are more dramatic and shorter episodes of external pressures, such as electoral defeat, which is the focus of this study.[15]

This need to invoke the external environment as a cause for change is the result of the nature of parties as institutions. As parties are organisations imbued with value and their survival is valued highly, they are not likely to change of their own accord.[16] This resistance to change which is a main characteristic of institutions and therefore of political parties makes it hard to explain change in political parties without reference to some external factor, since changes in the internal dynamic to produce party change must be explained somehow.[17]

2.3.1 Why study party change?

Studying party change is important because of the central position of parties in modern democratic systems. Unsurprisingly, normative judgments are often made as a result of empirical observations on the development of political parties. These normative judgments go back to the beginning of empirical research on political parties, when the desirability of their emergence was still a discussion. In observing the development of political parties into permanent organisations, Ostrogorski combined observation of the empirical reality of parties with fierce criticism of the way they enforced discipline and became vehicles for power.[18] The kind of parties criticised by Ostrogorski and Michels resembles the mass party type of a well-disciplined and centralised party with a class of professional politicians running it, even though they extrapolated this to respectively party and organisation in general.[19] In a similar vein, the elaboration of party types such as the catch-all party and the cartel party (see section 2.4 below) has gone hand in hand with warnings about what they might mean for the nature of democracy and the relationship between parties and voters.[20]

14. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 66.

15. A. Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power*, trans. from the Italian by M. Silver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1982]), 242; R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 265.

16. Cf. Michels, *Political Parties*, 373.

17. Cf. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 242.

18. Ostrogorski, *La Démocratie et les Partis Politiques*, 619ff.

19. Ostrogorski, *La Démocratie et les Partis Politiques*, 619ff. Michels, *Political Parties*.

20. O. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. J. LaPalombara and M. Weiner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 200; R. S. Katz and P. Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: the Emergence of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995): 115.

Studies of party change have also engaged with claims that political parties have been experiencing a 'crisis of party'. These claims often centered around social changes that shifted the linkage function of political parties.[21] Among others, rising electoral volatility as a result of partisan dealignment[22] and declining memberships of political parties in Western democracies[23] were observed. These large-scale electoral changes were the subject of several works in the literature which also deal with party change.[24]

The problem with the 'crisis of party' genre, as observed among others by Mair, was that while these developments did occur, parties survived.[25] Daalder as well as Mair imply that this may be the result of a normative bias.[26] Political parties proved a resilient institution.[27] In general, the consensus appears to be that part of the explanation for the survival of political parties as a category of institutions in Western Democracies is exactly their capacity for change. Rose and Mackie already noted this when they described their trade-off between internal and external pressures, stating that adaptation was "a necessary condition of survival".[28] Mair, in a sceptical lecture on the entire idea of a crisis of party, observed that parties had a remarkable capacity to adapt that enabled them to survive.[29] In other words: the reason for the continuity of political parties is their capacity to change. Naturally, this makes party change a highly important subject of inquiry.

2.3.2 Party change and historical neo-institutionalism

Indeed, it could be argued that the nature of parties as institutions makes it harder to explain change *tout court*. This is the first problem shared by the entire literature on party change. After all, if political parties are institutions and institutions are resistant to change, then it becomes easier to explain the persistence of political parties than the ways in which they have changed. This problem was described in more general terms by Hall and Taylor in their discussion of the new institutionalisms: under the assumptions of neo-institutionalist narratives, institutions are defined by stability, but if so, why do they change?[30]

21. R. S. Katz, "Party as linkage: a vestigial function?," *European Journal of Political Research* 18, no. 1 (1990): 158-159; Katz and Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy," 8; R. A. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 2, no. 4 (1996): 509.

22. See Mair, *Party System Change*, 77.

23. See P. Mair and I. van Biezen, "Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies, 1980-2000," *Party Politics* 7, no. 1 (2001): 5–21.

24. E.g. P. Mair, W. Müller, and F. Plasser, eds., *Political Parties and Electoral Change: Party Responses to Electoral Markets* (London: SAGE, 2004).

25. Mair, *Party System Change*, 89.

26. H. Daalder, "A Crisis of Party?," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 15, no. 4 (1992): 285; Mair, *Party System Change*, 88.

27. See for example K. Lawson and P. H. Merkl, eds., *When Parties Prosper: the Uses of Electoral Success* (Boulder: Lynne Riener, 2007), 1.

28. R. Rose and T. T. Mackie, "Do parties persist or fail? The big trade-off facing organizations," in *When Parties Fail: Emerging Alternative Organizations*, ed. K. Lawson and P. Merkl (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 534.

29. Mair, *Party System Change*, 89.

30. P. A. Hall and R. C. R. Taylor, "Political science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 937.

In the social sciences, the new historical institutionalism provides an important conceptual and theoretical vocabulary with which to think about the complex process of change. A central concept in this literature is path-dependency, a concept originating from the study of technological change in history that David described as "one damn thing follows another".[31] On a somewhat deeper conceptual level, path-dependency is usually conceived as a process by which previous events exert influence on the eventual outcomes of a process.[32]

Though the concept is useful in politics especially because of the complexity of the subject matter, some have rightly pointed out that it was never really clearly conceptualised.[33] Pierson himself offers a particularly useful and explicit characterisation of path-dependence as a process of increasing returns, where each step along a path increases the cost of turning away from it.[34] This is particularly useful to the analysis of political institutions, as it helps arrive at a way of thinking about how path-dependence impacts upon political processes in terms of cost-benefit.

The accompanying concept is that of the critical juncture or the punctuated equilibrium. The two resemble each other in important ways but are nevertheless distinct concepts. A state of punctuated equilibrium appears as a more formal concept. In this view, the development of institutions is marked by long periods of stable equilibrium, punctuated by shocks that throw the system off-balance and cause rapid change.[35] This view, though popular, has also been noted to employ rather strong assumptions: "institutions explain everything until they explain nothing", without a middle way.[36]

Like punctuated equilibrium, critical junctures appear as crucial periods of change spurred by crisis which occur in different ways in different cases.[37] Specifically, in historical sociology and economic history, critical junctures are presented as small, contingent events that trigger large path-dependent processes, such as the invention of the steam engine that sparked the Industrial Revolution first in England rather than in another country which may have had similar structural conditions.[38] Such macrohistorical analyses often seek to explain large changes occurring in different ways across different countries.[39]

In one such macrohistorical work Collier and Collier give a very useful elaboration of

31. P. A. David, "Clio and the Economics of QWERTY," *The American Economic Review* 75, no. 2 (1985): 332.

32. David, "Clio and the Economics of QWERTY," 332; R. Berins Collier and D. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 27; Hall and Taylor, "Political science and the Three New Institutionalisms," 941.

33. E.g. P. Pierson, "Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (2000): 251–267.

34. Ibid., 252-253.

35. S. D. Krasner, "Sovereignty: An Institutional Perspective," *Comparative Political Studies* 21, no. 1 (1988): 79.

36. K. Thelen and S. Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in *Structuring Politics. Historical Unilateralism in Comparative Analysis*, ed. S. Steinmo, K. Thelen, and F. Longstreth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 15.

37. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 29-30.

38. J. Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 4 (2000): 536-537.

39. For a classic in political science that falls within this category, see S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, eds., *Party Systems and voter alignments: cross-national perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967).

the concept which mitigates several of the problems with punctuated equilibrium.[40] The prior conditions still maintain some relevance to the outcome, and the outcome of the causal process is not stable per se but is made stable by mechanisms of reproduction that represent ongoing political and institutional processes.[41]

However, Capoccia and Kelemen have argued that the macrohistorical perspective on critical junctures is not necessarily a good fit for other fields of institutional analysis.[42] This is partly because these studies, by seeking to explain historical outcomes using the critical juncture framework, often explicitly or implicitly define them with reference to their outcome of change.[43] While Capoccia and Kelemen agree that critical junctures are the 'genetic' moments of path-dependence, i.e. the way they originate, they point out that the outcome may also be a restoration of the status quo.[44] They therefore define critical junctures more specifically as "relatively short periods of time during which there is a substantially heightened probability that agents' choices will affect the outcome of interest" and during which there is a greater and broader scope for change.[45] Since this study focuses not so much on why parties have turned out the way they have (the historical outcome) but on why parties in crisis act as they do (the process), this is the more useful definition for the purposes of this dissertation.

Path-dependence arguments generally represent continuity, since it conditions current outcomes on past actions, while critical juncture or punctuated equilibrium arguments represent the possibility of change. Especially where path-dependence is produced by institutions in a given society, this can produce periods of continuity.[46] Nevertheless, such a reading is too simplistic. In Collier and Collier's study on labour relations in Latin America, path-dependence arguments are used to get at complex causal processes and to account for the fact that similar causes lead to different outcomes in different countries.[47] This is also a strength of the path-dependence concept noted by Hall and Taylor.[48]

There is a broader field of organisational literature to consider. Political parties are not the only organisations or institutions where explaining change presents a problem. A wider field of organisational and political sociology has sought to address this central issue: institutions have something permanent about them and exist in a state of equilibrium, so why and how exactly do they change? Perhaps for this reason, Wilson has described particular processes of political organisational change, but has not gone into much detail about its antecedents.[49]

Broader organisational theories do offer explanations of change and choices made in the

40. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 30.
41. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 31; See also Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," 537.
42. G. Capoccia and R.D. Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (2007): 342.
43. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 30; Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," 513-514.
44. Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures," 342; 352.
45. Ibid., 348-349.
46. Hall and Taylor, "Political science and the Three New Institutionalisms," 942.
47. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 29.
48. Hall and Taylor, "Political science and the Three New Institutionalisms," 941.
49. J. Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 205-211.

process of change, albeit on small aspects of the concept of change. One such study is Fligstein's study of the diffusion of diversification in American industry, in which he argues that the adoption of changes depended on the willingness of industry elites to change and, more importantly, on the example of leading firms.[50] Relevant to our later discussion of shock, he also uses the concept of an organisational field to suggest that change is most likely when the usual structure and pecking order of the field are disrupted.[51] Others have cast the decision to innovate as a cost-benefit analysis. March and Simon state that organisations do not even search for alternative courses of action if the present course of action is satisfactory.[52] Even if they state that this is not due to any sort of resistance to change and that if a better course of action presents itself at any point an organisation will change, this focus on the high costs of change is something they have in common with those who believe organisations are resistant to change.[53]

2.3.3 Delineating party change

A second problem common to the entire party change literature is the question of what is and is not to be seen as party change. If one zooms in closely enough, parties change constantly. From one election to the next, slogans, policies and slates of candidates change, but this is not usually what the term party change means. Instead, party change as it is generally understood refers to a profound change to the party's essentials. According to Mair, this is exactly the problem with speaking of party change in individual parties – how does one know conclusively when a party has changed?[54] His solution is not to look at change in individual parties, but rather at change in party systems.[55] In the body of literature concerned with gradual party change, scholars have often followed this advice and looked at change across party systems as a whole rather than at individual parties.

Some related fields of study do not experience this problem. There is a wealth of studies on party platform change, which is studied using the available data on party manifestos.[56] This is also one of the fields of party change research that have recently seen the most activity. The earliest part of this literature focused mostly on environmental explanations

50. N. Fligstein, "The Structural Transformation of American Industry: An Institutional Account of the Causes of Diversification in the Largest Firms, 1919-1979," in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. W. W. Powell and P. J. DiMaggio (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 334-335.
51. Ibid., 313.
52. J. March and H. Simon, *Organizations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 194.
53. Ibid.
54. Mair, *Party System Change*, 49.
55. Ibid., 51.
56. Such as A. Volkens et al., *The Manifesto Data Collection: Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR)* (Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum für Sozialforschung (WZB), 2018).

such as shifts in voter positions[57] and the shifts of other parties[58]. More recently, internal factors such as the relative importance of office[59] and the power of party activists have been added to the list of explanations[60]. These studies employ statistical analysis of manifesto data to measure the response of parties to changes in the environment.

2.4 Gradual party change

As already briefly touched upon in the discussion above, a large volume of studies that treats party change as a gradual process is concerned with a succession of party types representing broad changes in the nature of political parties. Party types constitute broad categories of parties based largely on the way they interact with society and the state.[61] Duverger's typology of political parties in particular has been very influential.[62] His concepts of the top-down, loosely-organised cadre party founded by notables and the bottom-up, highly-organised mass party that emerged after universal suffrage have been incorporated in most of the successive contributions to the literature. Much like Duverger himself did with the mass party, these contributions to the literature usually posited that one party type would displace earlier types, leading to a sort of linear succession of party types.[63]

This part of the literature is also marked by successive claims that one party type would become dominant. This started with Duverger himself, who argued that the (left-wing) mass party enjoyed a competitive advantage due to being better-suited to the demands of modern politics and society, and would eventually become dominant.[64] It was criticized among others by Epstein, who claimed that the trend had not materialized and that in fact, rather the opposite was the case: a 'contagion from the right' marked by declining membership numbers and increasing focus on campaigning and communications which would lead to looser organisations.[65] Defending Duverger, Seiler proposed a perspective in which he reinterpreted these contagion theories as adaptation to new circumstances

57. J. Adams et al., "Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to Past Election Results?," *British Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 4 (2004): 589–610; J. Adams et al., "Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976-1998," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 3 (2006): 513–529; J. Adams, A.B. Haupt, and H. Stoll, "What Moves Parties? The Role of Public Opinion and Global Economic Conditions in Western Europe," *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 5 (2008): 611–639.

58. J. Adams and Z. Somer-Topcu, "Policy Adjustment by Parties in Response to Rival Parties' Policy Shifts: Spatial Theory and Dynamics of Party Competition in Twenty-Five Post-War Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (2009): 825–846.

59. G. Schumacher et al., "How Aspiration to Office Conditions the Impact of Government Participation on Party Platform Change," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2015, accessed June 17, 2015, `http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ajps.12174/abstract`.

60. Ibid.

61. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?," 509; Katz and Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy," 6.

62. Duverger, *Political Parties*.

63. Ibid., xvii; 64-65; 427.

64. Ibid., xvii; 427.

65. Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies*, 257.

without destroying previous forms.[66] For example, cadre parties did not disappear as a type and become mass parties; they merely adopted a more rigid form of organization. This resulted in a new typology of party types charting the ways in which mass and cadre parties have developed from their origins.[67]

Epstein's account of contagion from the right shares some of its logic with a highly influential addition to the expanding scheme of party types. Kirchheimer added a new party type known as the catch-all party.[68] Rather than going back to the cadre party, as Epstein more or less claimed, Kirchheimer argued that parties of all kinds were developing away from their origins.[69] He observed that parties were reducing their ideological baggage, strengthening their top leadership, de-emphasising their *classe gardée*, reducing the influence of individual members and securing access to a variety of interest groups.[70] He attributed this to the blurring of class divisions in post-war societies, which increasingly led parties to regard their ideological heritage as baggage. As a result, these parties "exchanged effectiveness in depth for a wider audience and more immediate electoral success".[71] Von Beyme made similar observations to Kirchheimer, observing that parties were accumulating more functions than in the past alongside processes of de-ideologisation, erosion of ties to social 'pillars' and a greater focus on the party elites.[72]

A third influential party type is the cartel party.[73] Observing how the decreasing number of party member had made parties vulnerable, Katz and Mair proposed that parties had captured the state for support with the use of state subventions.[74] In effect, they argue, the differences in resources between winners and losers of election have become smaller.[75] The resulting "cartel parties" basically helped secure eachother's existence through inter-party collusion and through capture of the state.[76] This proposed new party type has had its detractors, with criticism focusing among others on the conceptual confusion between the party level and the systemic level[77] and the alarming consequences for the quality of representation the theory foresees.[78]

The key thing to take away from the body of literature on party types is the focus on macro-level developments in the party system with largely structural antecedents. What these contributions, and others like them which will not be discussed extensively in this chapter, such as the electoral-professional party[79] and the business-firm party[80],

66. D.-L. Seiler, *De la Compairason des Partis Politiques* (Paris: Economica, 1986), 198.
67. Ibid., 245.
68. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems."
69. Ibid., 185.
70. Ibid., 190.
71. Ibid., 184.
72. Von Beyme, *Politische Parteien in westlichen Demokratien*, 430-434.
73. Katz and Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy," 8.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., 16.
76. Ibid., 17.
77. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?," 508.
78. H. Enroth, "Cartelization versus representation? On a misconception in contemporary party theory," *Party Politics* 23, no. 2 (2017): 132.
79. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 264.
80. J. Hopkin and C. Paolucci, "The Business Firm Model of Party Organisation. Cases from Spain and Italy," *European Journal of Political Research* 35 (1999): 307–339.

have in common is that they signal certain large developments in the overall structure of parties and party competition, which they then proceed to explain with reference to social developments. They focus on how parties in the plural change, or rather, on how *party* as a concept changes, and why. The developments they describe are gradual and cumulative, the result of a slow-moving adaptation to social circumstances.

The problem with this, of course, is that this particular body of literature is rather deterministic and assumes a dialectic in which one dominant party type displaces the previous one. Previous authors have convincingly argued, with reference to deviations in individual countries, that it is too simple to assume that a single dominant party type will materialise in all countries.[81] Koole observes that this deterministic approach is not a very fruitful avenue for research, stating that it has so far produced only high-level studies trying to demonstrate a switch in the dominant paradigm, as it were, and idiosyncratic studies of individual parties that do or do not comply with what should be the dominant type.[82] Therefore, it might be more fruitful for party research to focus on "... why, and under what circumstances, a certain category of parties develop in one direction and another category in another."[83] This is essentially a problem of complex causality that can be addressed by path-dependence arguments, with special regard to the importance of sequence.[84]

Krouwel can be said to have done this (although without the path-dependence argument), splitting the development of political parties over time into their electoral, programmatic and organisational dimensions using various indicators.[85] One has to wonder, however, whether the question Koole posed can be answered by observing various party types at the macro-level in this way.[86] Since research is mostly taking place on the system level, what stands out are logically the system-wide trends that lead to the kind of literature that has developed so far on party types. Yet when describing these trends, there is the risk that has demonstrably affected the body of literature on party types of extrapolating the development wrongly to the entire population, leading to a kind of 'dominant type versus exceptions' literature.[87]

In order to get at the reasons why certain parties develop in certain ways and others in others, the analysis needs to be taken into the individual party level. Additionally, it needs to be able to point out the sequence of events that leads to change. This is where insights on external shocks, which will be considered below, could be relevant to the further development of the literature as a whole. If we assume, based on the insights of organisational and institutional theory, that change is not something that just happens when we are looking at an institution like a political party, then it also follows that changes happen most when parties are put under pressure.

81. Krouwel, "Otto Kirchheimer and the Catch-All Party"; Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 204.

82. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?," 520.

83. Ibid.

84. Hall and Taylor, "Political science and the Three New Institutionalisms," 941.

85. A. Krouwel, *Party Transformations in European Democracies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 32.

86. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?," 520.

87. This problem was also observed by Daalder, "A Crisis of Party?," 285.

In this way, furthering the body of literature on external shocks might be the way forward for the literature on party change. By observing the moments that theoretically would force parties to make the most dramatic adjustments, much can potentially be learned about the reasons for the development of certain parties in certain directions and others in other directions. This is what this study intends by studying parties after a heavy electoral defeat – by looking closely at the reasons parties had to take actions that lead to party change, we can perhaps start to bring the overall development of political parties more sharply into focus.

2.5 Shock-induced party change

It has already been observed that the conception of parties as institutions makes it easier to explain their persistence than their change. The point of departure of the part of the literature concerned with external shocks is exactly this: that parties, being institutions, are inherently conservative and resistant to change. The theorists in this field seek to explain why parties make large changes, primarily to their organisational structure, and as a related question, why the internal balance of power in parties shifts. This body of literature hinges on two major contributions: those of Panebianco and Harmel and Janda.[88]

Panebianco presents one of the more extensive treatments of the question of party organisational change in his *Political Parties: Organization and Power*. In doing so, he sums up various earlier debates occurring in the literature about changes in political parties. First, he engages the idea that parties must necessarily develop in a certain way, concluding that there are in fact many paths to change.[89] This is very relevant to the assumptions inherent in the research question posed in chapter one: after all, the very question of how parties change is only relevant if the direction is not predetermined simply by their being political parties. In a second discussion, Panebianco considers the intentionality of change and the problem of unintended effects.[90] He strikes a middle way here – changes are intentional but can also have unintended consequences.[91]

Most importantly, Panebianco treats one of the major questions of the organisational change literature: whether the origins of change are endogenous or exogenous.[92] In effect, he argues, neither is sufficient: purely endogenous origins cannot explain the shift of power that produced them, while purely exogenous origins run into the problem that organisational change does not always occur even when the environment changes. The model Panebianco proposes combines the two: something in the environment changes, challenging and ultimately discrediting and displacing the party's dominant elite, ushering in a new dominant coalition which then restructures the organisation.[93] Relevant to

88. Panebianco, *Political Parties*; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change."
89. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 240.
90. Ibid., 240-242.
91. Ibid., 241-242.
92. Ibid., 242.
93. Ibid., 244.

the topic of this dissertation, electoral defeat is named as a prime example of such an environmental crisis.[94]

Harmel and Janda build on the theory of shock-induced change introduced by Panebianco by bringing in the concept of party goals.[95] The attribution of certain goals to parties is not new: after all, Ostrogorski and Michels had already observed a process of goal displacement.[96] Likewise, rational choice theory has variously assumed that parties seek to maximise votes[97], or to attain office[98] or concrete policy goals[99]. Building on these three goals, Strøm and Müller offer a vision in which parties are after a mixture of these goals and are forced to compromise between them.[100] This is analytically useful, if imperfect because it generally takes votes to enact policy or gain office. They acknowledge this by stating that votes as a goal only serve the purpose of obtaining something else, which is a useful thought.[101] However, precisely this interconnectedness of the different party goals makes it very difficult to distinguish what a party's goal is in practice. A party can pursue a policy it thinks will gain it votes or office, and yet claim to do so for reasons of the policy itself, or seek to gain votes to pursue its policy by moderating it a little.

By bringing in this concept of party goals, Harmel and Janda offer an account of how an external shock works to force party change.[102] They assume that each party has a 'primary goal': either policy, office, votes or maximizing internal democracy.[103] This allows a higher level of detail in thinking about the extent of party change to be expected.[104] Roughly speaking, when this primary goal is affected, pressures towards party change are higher.[105] There are therefore two ways in which party change can occur in the Harmel and Janda model: power-oriented changes to consolidate or preserve the power of a dominant faction or goal-oriented changes to pursue the party's primary goal when the party's performance is unsatisfactory.[106] While it is largely left implicit, therefore, Harmel and Janda also add the element of varying extents of party change to existing party change models. This is not without important consequences for analyses based on their model, as shall be argued later.

Several scholars have operationalised and tested the propositions offered by Harmel and Janda.[107] A first quantitative analysis by the authors themselves and others found

94. Ibid., 243.
95. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 272-273.
96. Ostrogorski, *La Démocratie et les Partis Politiques*, 642; Michels, *Political Parties*, 373.
97. A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 21.
98. W. H. Riker, *The theory of political coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).
99. R. Axelrod, *Conflict of Interest* (1970); A. De Swaan, *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation*, with a foreword by Amsterdam (Elsevier, 1973).
100. K. Strøm and W. C. Müller, "Political Parties and Hard Choices," in *Policy, Office or Votes: How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, ed. K. Strøm and W. C. Müller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 13.
101. Ibid., 9.
102. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change."
103. Ibid., 278-279.
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid., 280-281.
106. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278; See for Panebianco's account of power-oriented change Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 245.
107. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 279-283.

support for the model's most enduring contribution: party change does not just happen.[108] Environmental shocks did not automatically lead to party change without internal changes accompanying them. The study did not test the propositions on party goals, however, showing how tricky their operationalisation remains.[109] A study zooming in on party manifestos (and therefore related to the party platform change literature) also showed that the more disastrous an electoral defeat, the more likely a party was to undertake a drastic change of identity as expressed in their manifestos.[110] Albeit limited, this offers some support to the hypothesis on party goals, since as Strøm and Müller argued, votes mediate office and policy goals.[111]

However, as Müller observed, the general analysis, while thorough, was not really suited to finding actual causal relationships.[112] Indeed, the analysis can only go so far as to find correlations that may indicate causal relationships. This is, in essence, an instance of the 'black box' problem. We know roughly what cause and effect are: in this case, internal and external factors lead to party change, or at least coincide with it. However, we cannot be sure what happens in between, and it seems logical to use qualitative analysis, specifically case studies, to mitigate it.[113] In this context, it is worth mentioning Bale's study of the Conservative Party since 1945. He concludes that of the three major drivers of change he studies (defeat, leadership or dominant faction), defeat tended to have a big effect, but that leadership was also important and bigger defeats did not always bring bigger changes. His conclusions in general reveal a high degree of complexity and he ends by rightly cautioning fellow scholars that party change is inherently complex.[114]

Applying the Harmel and Janda model to the case of the Socialist Party of Austria, Müller found support for the model and noted in particular the strength of leadership change as an explanatory variable.[115] He was less sure about the effect of electoral defeat, but attributed this, according to the model, to the party having an office goal. Similarly, Bille found that although leadership change did not always lead to party change, it itself did conform to the expectation that losing office rather than losing votes was the most important shock to the case of the Danish Social Democrats.[116] The model has also more recently been more or less successfully applied to cases as wide-ranging as the strategy shift by Palestine's Hamas[117] and the merger that resulted in the Conservative Party of

108. R. Harmel et al., "Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change: An Empirical Analysis," *West European Politics* 18, no. 1 (1995): 17.
109. Ibid., 2-8.
110. K. Janda et al., "Changes in Party Identity: Evidence from Party Manifestos," *Party Politics* 1, no. 2 (1995): 189.
111. Strøm and Müller, "Political Parties and Hard Choices," 9.
112. W. C. Müller, "Inside the Black Box: A Confrontation of Party Executive Behaviour and Theories of Party Organizational Change," *Party Politics* 3, no. 3 (1997): 295.
113. Ibid., 295. To go into more detail on why case studies are more suited to this task is beyond the scope of this chapter, but will be treated more thoroughly in chapter four.
114. T. Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945: the Drivers of Party Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 313-317.
115. Müller, "Inside the Black Box," 308-309.
116. L. Bille, "Leadership Change and Party Change: The Case of the Danish Social Democratic Party, 1960-95," *Party Politics* 3, no. 3 (1997): 389.
117. F. Løvlie, "Explaining Hamas's Changing Electoral Strategy, 1996-2006," *Government and Opposition* 48, no. 4 (2013): 570–593.

Canada[118].

What stands out in the body of case studies applying the Harmel and Janda model is the wide range of developments they attempt to explain. Some authors seem to be content to explain the occurrence of change[119] or to explain a certain phenomenon[120]. This is significant because things get complicated and potentially problematic when authors get specific about the extent and type of changes expected.

Duncan's analysis of the Dutch CDA's 1994 defeat using the Harmel and Janda model is more structured and comprehensive than most studies in describing the changes.[121] Duncan's insistence on looking at changes in four subfields – leadership, strategy, organisation and programme – lead him to reveal an important puzzle posing a challenge to the Harmel and Janda model. In the case of the CDA, Duncan encounters a puzzling absence of programmatic change in circumstances that, according to the propositions formulated by Harmel and Janda, should lead to drastic changes across the board.[122] Significantly, this leads him to conclude that not only is the focus on a single goal evidently too simple, but that other factors such as the electoral system need to be incorporated in the model.[123]

Still in use decades after its first formulation, the most-cited contribution of the model is that it is wrong to assume that "party changes just happen or must happen", and with good reason.[124] Its multi-facetted understanding of the causes of party change as circumstances overcoming the resistance of all large organisations to change has been rightly influential. The idea that parties change most abruptly when their primary goals are threatened has found ample support in these case studies (see above). That parties change after an external shock seems to have been demonstrated sufficiently.

However, the flipside of all this is that after the formulation of the Harmel and Janda model, theory development on external shocks seems to have stalled. In part, problems such as those felt in Duncan's study of the CDA can be regarded as the result of overstretching the model. After all, this particular model was not intended and therefore not constructed to explain which types of party change will occur, only to test and demonstrate that party change occurs after shocks and that more severe shocks lead to more extensive change.[125] The model simply cannot explain why the CDA after 1994 did not change its programme (in Duncan's view) but did change its organisation.[126] And if the external shocks angle is to be used to gain further insight on the way different parties change in different ways, this has to be addressed.

118. E. Bélanger and J.-F. Godbout, "Why Do Parties Merge? The Case of the Conservative Party of Canada," *Parliamentary Affairs* 63, no. 1 (2010): 41–65.
119. Bille, "Leadership Change and Party Change"; Müller, "Inside the Black Box."
120. Løvlie, "Explaining Hamas's Changing Electoral Strategy, 1996-2006"; Bélanger and Godbout, "Why Do Parties Merge?"
121. F. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats During 'Purple Hague', 1994-8," *Party Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 69–87.
122. Ibid., 83.
123. Ibid., 84.
124. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 261.
125. Ibid., 262.
126. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 83.

The problems could very well be due to a linear and unidirectional definition of party change as change away from the party's origins. It has already been discussed how this is a problem in the body of literature concerned with party types, where the prevailing tendency has been to describe a succession of dominant party types.[127] But it is also part of the problem demonstrated in Duncan's case study. He notes continuity in the ideological or programmatic area, but at the same time there had been considerable activity in that area.[128] In light of concerns about the party's loss of identity which he also notes, this begs the question whether the situation is actually one of continuity or of change back towards the party's prior identity.[129] The model presented and tested in this dissertation will seek to address both of these problems with past contributions to the debate on external shocks.

Before moving on to the conclusion of this review of the literature, it should be noted that the idea that parties change as a result of shocks appeared in a different form in the wake of what is called the Great Recession in the first half of the 21st century (by analogy to the Great Depression a century earlier). Treating the Great Recession like a shock (but not explicitly in the tradition of this particular party literature), Bremer has tried to measure its impact on the development of parties and party systems in Europe, naming it a "critical juncture".[130] He concludes that the European centre-left had responded to the crisis in an unusual way relative to other party families by at the same time reaffirming the need for fiscal prudence and repudiating the economic agenda. They did not, as expected, uniformly shift left. In a similar study on stances towards European integration in Southern Europe, Charalambous *et al.* found that parties had increased competition over the issue of European integration as a result of the Great Recession, but interestingly, that this development was not mirrored among legislators.[131] These studies are interesting because they show the important effect of shocks from outside the party system on the development of political parties within the system.

Using another crisis, Meyer and Schoen showed that parties also anticipate the effects of a policy crisis, and studied the effects on electoral behaviour of the Fukushima nuclear disaster.[132] In a similar vein, Kim and Solt found that in addition to electoral shocks, the fall of the Berlin wall also caused parties to relabel.[133] However, there is always the risk of treating a crisis of this variety as a shock in a category all by itself, which diminishes the generalisability of findings. Especially given the role the European Union and its institutions played in the politics of the Great Recession in Europe, it remains to be seen if insights from these studies can be applied beyond Europe.

127. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems"; Katz and Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy"; Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel?"
128. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 78-81.
129. Ibid., 78.
130. B. Bremer, "The missing left? Economic crisis and the programmatic response of social democratic parties in Europe," *Party Politics* 24, no. 1 (2018): 35.
131. G. Charalambous, N. Conti, and A. Pedrazzini, "The political contestation of European integration in Southern Europe: Friction Among and Within Parties," *Party Politics* 24, no. 1 (2018): 48.
132. M. Meyer and H. Schoen, "Avoiding vote loss by changing policy positions: the Fukushima disaster, party responses, and the German electorate," *Party Politics* 23, no. 4 (2017): 431.
133. M. Kim and F. Solt, "The dynamics of party relabelling: Why do parties change names?," *Party Politics* 23, no. 4 (2017): 444.

2.6 Conclusion: Towards a new theory of shocks and change

As we have seen, the political science literature on party change has proven very proficient at explaining broad patterns of gradual party change as well as the occurrence of party change in general after external shocks. In some fields, such as programmatic, organizational and leadership changes, the causes of specific types of change are the subject matter of an extensive literature of their own. The two bodies of party change literature are largely complementary: contributions based on party types tend to be better-suited to explaining organizational change, while research on external shocks and change accounts for faster-moving areas of change such as programmatic and leadership changes.

As has also been argued above, the body of literature on external shocks has so far provided evidence that shocks of various kind do lead to some sort of party change. It seems plausible that the most abrupt changes take place when a party is put under extended pressure. However, party scholars are faced with a problem when attempting to further refine the theory to account for the multitude of different ways in which parties, once they have decided on the need to change, do change themselves in response to an external shock. The quantitative study reported by Harmel *et al.* did not touch on this at all, lumping programmatic and organizational variables together,[134] and the single-case studies have either confined themselves to specific modes of change (implicitly or explicitly) or ran into problems explaining the absence of changes in one particular area. They rarely have defined precisely in which areas they would expect changes to occur, with the exception of Duncan's study on the CDA.

In addition, without defining precisely where change is to be expected, there is always a risk of running afoul of Mair's problem with identifying party change.[135] If change is confined to party organization, but programmatic change is lacking, to what extent has the party still changed substantially after a shock? Part of the challenge of Duncan's CDA case study is that he considered the programme to be such an important part of the substance of the CDA that he was confounded by its seeming absence.[136] In other words: without programmatic change, he could not be entirely sure of the extent of change in the party.

The aim of this dissertation in terms of its contribution to this literature on party shocks and party change is to offer more clarity on why certain parties favour certain changes while others favour others. To do so, it needs a model which adds another step. The existing models stop at the need for and consequently presence of change. A new theoretical model is necessary to explain the choices that follow next: in which areas, and more importantly in which direction, will the changes be made? Therefore, it will need to move away from the common perception of change as being one-directional away from the party's identity and roots, and move towards a concept of change that can also involve the intensification or renewal of a party's prior commitments. In doing so, it also brings back in the concept of path-dependency as an explanatory factor determining the type of

134. Harmel et al., "Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change," 8.
135. Mair, *Party System Change*, 49.
136. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 83.

change.

The next chapter aims to construct a heuristic model that functions as the starting point for building such a theoretical model. This model seeks to combine the demonstrated strengths of the shock theory models in explaining whether a party will change, while recognizing the variety of internal and external factors that can lead to party change with a more specific understanding of dimensions of change in particular parties. In doing so, it intends to take a next step in understanding how shocks cause parties to change.

3 Reinforce or Extend? A new model of shock-induced change

3.1 Introduction

As the previous chapter has shown, shocks can definitely be said to induce party change. However, development of the theory has stalled. It was not designed to account for the presence or absence of specific changes in a systematic way. Therefore, the theory thus far is insufficient to further our understanding of the way parties change after a shock. The current chapter represents the first step in formulating a theoretical model that can account for the presence or absence of specific changes. The aim is to develop the conceptual vocabulary and heuristic devices necessary to start thinking about why parties make different decisions following an electoral shock. The model developed in this chapter, therefore, functions both as a tentative theoretical model and as a broader heuristic model intended to further understanding of the topic. This is important at this early stage of theorising, as insights derived in this latter way may be used to further refine the model and develop it into a full theoretical model.

The model proposed here is a critical juncture model. It views the period of crisis following an electoral shock as a moment of heightened contingency.[1] During this period, the range of available options becomes broader and the choices of actors therefore more important. This matches the idea that the occurrence of an external shock can cause further-reaching change than would be possible during normal competition. Instead of a minor programmatic adjustment, a party in crisis could contemplate an ideological overhaul, for example. The electoral shock causes a period of uncertainty and higher stakes: a critical juncture.

In addition, the model borrows elements from Collier and Collier.[2] To summarise the discussion in the previous chapter: the model sees the crisis as a similar critical juncture unfolding in different ways across different cases. The previous conditions produce an electoral shock, which causes a critical juncture. The legacy of this critical juncture is built through causal mechanisms of production and reproduction, in the case of this study a core recovery strategy and changes following from that strategy. All the while, the previous conditions that produced the shock remain present in the form of path-dependence and impact on the process. The concept of critical juncture is a good point of departure to build a model addressing the issues of party change which, after all, are

1. Cf. G. Capoccia and R.D. Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (2007): 348-349.

2. R. Berins Collier and D. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 30.

caused by complex causality: it has been demonstrated that shocks lead to change across cases, but different mechanisms intervening between the cause and this general outcome also produce different varieties of change. This is the type of challenge the Collier and Collier model was built to address.[3]

In section 3.2, the relationship between shocks and critical junctures will be discussed. The justification for limiting this project to electoral shocks will also be explained. Section 3.3 moves to the central theoretical workings of the new model, conceptualising the choices made in a crisis as a choice between appealing to core and non-core voters. Section 3.4, with the help of the literature on external shocks, seeks to provide for the theoretical possibility that change does not occur. Section 3.5 presents the essence of the model and gives a conceptualisation of the major independent and dependent variables used in the model, formulating a number of propositions based on the model that will form the basis of the tests of the model conducted in this dissertation. Section 3.6. offers a brief concluding view.

3.2 Electoral shocks and critical junctures

This study treats electoral shocks as the causes of critical junctures. This term stems from historical institutionalism and is invoked to explain institutional change after a crisis. It is often juxtaposed with path-dependency and considered somewhat equivalent to the concept of punctuated equilibrium. According to the formulation by Collier and Collier, a critical juncture is the result of a crisis or cleavage and leads to mechanisms of production and reproduction of a (policy) legacy.[4] This works admirably at the country level, which is the focus of their study on approaches to labour unions. However, the distinction between mechanisms of production and reproduction are not clear when the focus is on the decision-making within a political party. Organisational changes, for instance, are arguably their own mechanisms of reproduction, since changes in formal rules are more or less permanent.

As argued in chapter two, this study follows the definition given by Capoccia and Kelemen.[5] They define a critical juncture as a relatively short period of time during which there is a heightened probability of meaningful impact by actors within an institutional context. The critical juncture framework implies that the critical juncture is brought on by an important event. In the context of this study, that event is a heavy electoral defeat. As has been argued quite convincingly, external shocks of this kind are more likely to lead to change.[6] Defining change as the potential outcome of the critical juncture, a heavy electoral defeat certainly increases its probability. Therefore, a heavy electoral defeat can be seen as leading to a critical juncture.

However, we still need to specify what constitutes an electoral shock. What differen-

3. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 29.

4. Ibid., 30-31.

5. Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures," 348.

6. A. Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power*, trans. from the Italian by M. Silver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1982]), 243; R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 265-266.

tiates election defeats which qualify as shocks from those that do not? This is strongly related to the reason these shocks lead to a higher probability of change in the first place. If a defeat does not make it more likely for a party to change, it is definitely not a shock. Panebianco and Harmel and Janda agree that a shock is a strong environmental pressure.[7] Harmel and Janda additionally propose that this pressure must impact negatively on the party's primary goal for it to be considered a shock.[8] This primary goal is defined in terms of policy, office, votes or internal democracy. The problem with this definition is that, as Strøm and Müller acknowledge, parties have multiple goals.[9] Determining a party's primary goal is an empirical nightmare. One need only look at Duncan's puzzlement that the Dutch CDA did not act as a purely office-seeking party from 1994 to 2002 to realise that.[10]

Electoral shocks are special because they alone can be expected to affect any party, no matter its mix of goals. In a democratic system, the ballot box defines the power relationships among political parties. In a system where coalitions are required, this influence might be smaller.[11] Generally, however, it is still true that a larger number of votes increases a party's influence. The less votes a party gets, therefore, the less resources it has to secure its goals, even if that goal is policy or office. This is why electoral shocks can be expected to lead to an increased probability of party change.

Returning to the definition of an electoral shock, it becomes clear that the distinguishing factor is one of magnitude. Electoral shocks are distinguished from "normal" electoral defeats because they lose a party more votes or seats. They are electoral defeats that weaken a party in such a way that a rational party elite would have no other option than to consider them crises and act on them. The line is drawn at that point where the decline in a party's performance is so sharp that business-as-usual no longer cuts it. Therefore, electoral shocks can be defined as electoral defeats of such a magnitude that they durably compromise a party's electoral potential. In other words: an electoral shock is an electoral defeat in which a party loses so heavily that if it were to carry on within the bounds of normal competition, it would see its electoral potential permanently diminished. This is why, although parties often use them to estimate their likely performance, we cannot factor in opinion polls, since there is always a chance that they could change or even turn out to be wrong. Even when the defeat could be seen coming in the opinion polls for a while, therefore, when it materialises in practice it still counts as a shock. Before a heavy defeat predicted by the polls, a party can still hope that these polls will be proven

7. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 243; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 267.

8. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 267.

9. K. Strøm and W. C. Müller, "Political Parties and Hard Choices," in *Policy, Office or Votes: How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, ed. K. Strøm and W. C. Müller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 9.

10. F. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats During 'Purple Hague', 1994-8," *Party Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 83.

11. See K. Deschouwer, *The Survival of the Fittest: Measuring and Explaining Adaptation and Change of Political Parties*, Paper prepared for presentation at the Workshop on 'Democracies and the Organization of Political Parties', European Consortium for Political Research, Limerick, Ireland, 30 March to 4 April., 1992, 16.

wrong. In a similar vein, while a heavy defeat being unforeseen by the opinion polls could certainly strengthen the sense of crisis within a party, there are too many ways of dealing with the polls to consider them in the definition of shock in their own right.

It is up to party elites where the line between a normal defeat and a shock is drawn exactly. As argued by Koole and Van Praag, perception is an important part of a party's strategy.[12] While diminished resources such as party funding may therefore play a role, what is more important is whether a party sees its electoral potential as having been durably compromised. This means various factors in individual cases might lower a party's "pain threshold", so to speak. A party which has been in government for all its existence will likely see a defeat as a shock sooner if it also stands to lose office for the first time. A party in opposition might experience a shock earlier if it loses significantly once more. As shocks are operationalised further in chapter 4, the challenge is finding a rule of thumb that includes most cases that can be considered shock, while also allowing for these special circumstances to be taken into account.

By seeing electoral shocks as events initiating a critical juncture, we arrive at a definition with a number of elements. The first is its relatively short span of time. Due to this criterium, an electoral shock cannot be gradual and must be a single electoral defeat. The second is the heightened probability of change. This occurs, following Harmel and Janda, because a party's capacity to accomplish its goals is diminished.[13] For this to be the case, the defeat must be large enough (or at least perceived to be so) to make it very unlikely that the party can recover acting as it had before the crisis. These factors combine to make an electoral shock a likely cause of party change, opening up a window of opportunity for major changes. It is whether these changes occur and how they occur that the model focuses on next.

3.3 Constructing the Model

Once faced with an electoral shock, a party faces two choices: whether to change and how it changes (strategy of change). These two choices structure two subsequent phases of decision-making within the model. As in every model, there is a degree of simplification: in practice, the phases might not be very well-delineated. However, to answer the eventual question of what changes and why, it is necessary to consider each in turn. Explaining a party's actions assumes some sort of unifying framework. Therefore, it is vital to go from establishing the decision that something needs to change, through the general strategy, to the concrete actions a party takes. This is the way the model is structured, as can be seen in figure 3.1. In this section, this general statement of the model will be elaborated before moving on to specifics, conceptualisation and propositions.

As has been argued in section 3.2, the starting point is the electoral shock, i.e. the low level of electoral performance. This causes the critical juncture because it heightens

12. R. A. Koole and P. van Praag Jr., "Electoral Competition in a Segmented Society: Campaign Strategies and the Importance of Elite Perceptions," *European Journal of Political Research* 18 (1990): 66.

13. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 281.

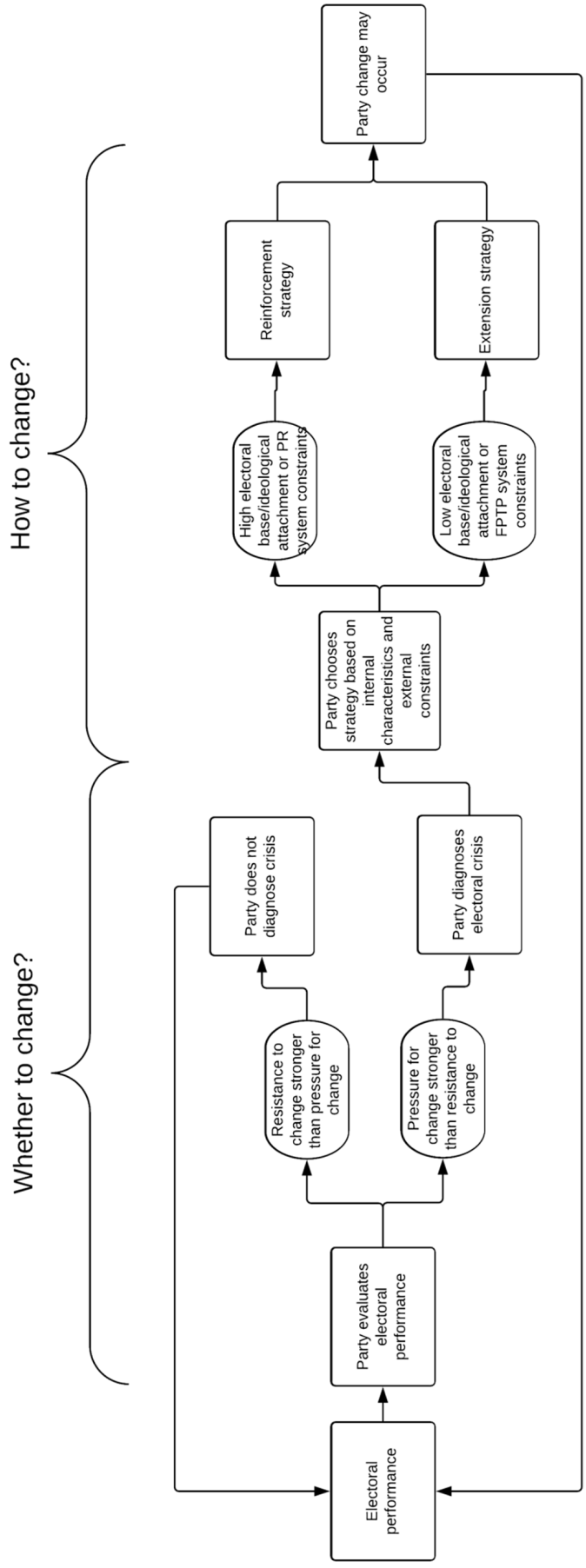


Figure 3.1: Overview of the model

the probability of change.[14] It makes sense empirically to assume that this takes the form of forcing a reconsideration of the party's essentials and its place in the party system. However, the definition of critical junctures only implies a heightened *probability* of change, not its inevitability. Under such electoral strain, doing nothing risks further decline, possibly leading to party death or elite displacement. Since party elites have at least some self-interest, this is not an attractive prospect.[15] This is why change is the most likely outcome. The model must, however, also allow for the theoretical possibility of non-change. This helps avoid one of the common fallacies Capoccia and Kelemen identified in critical juncture scholarship of defining a critical juncture by the outcome of change.[16]

This question whether or not to change is the essence of the 'whether'-stage. Many parties make a habit of evaluating every election, especially those that went badly for them. These evaluations form the concrete expression of the 'whether'-stage. The most likely result is the conclusion that change is needed for the party to recover. This is referred to in the model as "diagnosing a crisis". The opposite is that the crisis does not appear as such to the party. In this situation, the party concludes its current strategy and modus operandi will be sufficient for a better performance at the next election, or at least to meet its goals. In such an event, a party will not diagnose the shock as a crisis and ignore it. They might make smaller changes, but these can be characterised as superficial or run-of-the-mill.[17] When a crisis is not diagnosed, the model moves straight back to electoral performance, since the changes made are too small to fall under the next phases of the model.

The 'how'-stage follows the diagnosis of a crisis. At this stage, the party evaluates which strategy to pursue towards electoral recovery. In a sense, this phase contains what Collier and Collier call the mechanisms of production of the legacy.[18] At this point, it is clear that the party must do something to increase its electoral performance and hold on to those votes. In essence, the choices made at the 'how'-stage are the same as those a party would usually have to make. However, due to the increased contingency of the situation, the bandwidth within which changes can take place is broader. Since a party is at a critical juncture, more fundamental changes than the usual array of adjustments are possible.

This broader array of changes would be impossible to explain individually and without some sort of unifying framework that serves both as a starting point for theory development and as a heuristic device to reduce the complexity entailed by the breadth of possibilities for change to more manageable proportions. To construct this framework, we will draw on insights from studies of electoral strategy during election campaigns.

Recently, a number of authors have conducted studies into the electoral strategies of

14. Cf. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*; Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures," 348.

15. Strøm and Müller, "Political Parties and Hard Choices," 13-14; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278; A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957).

16. Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures," 352.

17. P. Mair, "Adaptation and Control: Towards an Understanding of Party and Party System Change (1983)," in *On Parties, Party Systems and Democracy: Selected Writings of Peter Mair*, ed. I. van Biezen (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2014), 170.

18. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 30.

parties during election campaigns. Kriesi *et al.* attribute the relative newness of this field to the general supposition that election campaigns have a very minimal effect.[19] Instead, a lot of attention in the literature on electoral strategy has been paid to spatial models of party behaviour.[20] In these studies of election campaign strategies, a twofold distinction is made between a strategy of playing to core voters and one aiming to win the votes of non-core voters. This is variously called a defensive or offensive strategy[21] or the mobilizing and chasing strategies[22]. More importantly, there is at least some evidence that parties actually think in these terms.[23] In these studies, different courses of action appeal to core and non-core voters.[24] Parties need to balance between holding on to what they once had and reaching out to new voters. They can only do both to a limited extent.[25]

In this study, this dichotomy from the study of electoral strategy is adapted to the situation of a party in crisis and the increased scope for changes. This form of strategy will be called a recovery strategy. The model presented here refers to two types of recovery strategies. The first, the reinforcement strategy, is defensive. It appeals to core voters, that is, voters who barring unusual circumstances (the election possibly being one) have always supported the party at previous elections.[26] Like its counterpart in Rohrschneider's chasing strategy, it is characterised by a traditional approach, introducing changes to move the party into a more traditional direction.[27] The opposite strategy is referred to as the extension strategy, and is offensive in character. Rather than looking exclusively to core voters, the extension strategy (also) seeks to win the votes of new groups of voters. These voters can belong to a category of floating voters or be supporters of other parties who might be encouraged to switch. In doing so, the strategy makes changes to the party to de-emphasise its traditional heritage in an attempt to broaden its support. The two strategies represent change to add depth or breadth of support, respectively.

Where electoral strategy revolves primarily around campaign plans for one election, a recovery strategy (whether reinforcement or extension) has scope to go further. By analogy to marketing, while an electoral strategy only adjusts the sales strategy, a recovery

19. H. Kriesi, L. Bernhard, and R. Hänggli, "The Politics of Campaigning – Dimensions of Strategic Action," in *Politik in der Mediendemokratie*, ed. F. Marcinkowski and B. Pfetsch (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2009), 345.

20. E.g. I. Budge and D. Robertson, "Do Parties Differ, and How? Comparative Discriminant and Factor Analyses," in *Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: Spatial Analyses of Post-War Election Programmes in 19 Democracies*, ed. I. Budge, D. Robertson, and D. Hearl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 387–416.

21. J. J. M. Van Holsteyn and G. A. Irwin, "CDA, naar voren! Over de veranderende verkiezingsstrategie van het CDA," in *Jaarboek 1987*, ed. R. A. Koole (Groningen: Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen, 1988), 69-70.

22. R. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing: how do parties target voters in election campaigns?," *Electoral Studies* 21, no. 3 (2002): 368.

23. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 374; J.J. Albright, "Partisans or independent? Evidence for campaign targets from elite interviews in Spain," *Electoral Studies* 27, no. 4 (2008): 720.

24. See Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 368; J. Green, "A Test of Core Vote Theories: The British Conservatives, 1997-2005," *British Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 4 (2011): 739.

25. Although a successful strategy employs both, as noted by Van Holsteyn and Irwin, "CDA, naar voren!"

26. See A. Campbell et al., eds., *Elections and the Political Order* (New York: John Wiley / Sons, 1966), 7.

27. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 368.

strategy can also adjust the product itself. These changes following on from the strategic aim are often more than adjustments in manifestoes or campaign plans. They represent a deeper kind of change to programme or ideology, long-term targeting practices, elite recruitment, party symbols or organisation. In this study, the assumption is that the party's strategy becomes visible in what the party does. Changes will be assigned to either a reinforcement or extension strategy depending on their inferred aim. In section 3.5.1. of this chapter, a framework shall be developed to classify changes on the tactical, programmatic and organisational dimensions into the two strategies.

In this way, the extension and reinforcement strategies serve the two purposes intended for the model. Theoretically, they provide a foundation for developing expectations about the causal mechanisms at play. As we shall see shortly, the fact that the choice made in crisis is presented as a choice between core and non-core voters leads naturally to the assumption that historical loyalties will play a large role in the process. Another theoretical advantage of linking up the debate on party change following external shocks with electoral strategy in this way is that it avoids seeing change as unidimensional. The reinforcement strategy can represent change just as much as the extension strategy. It is simply of a different character, moving (back) towards a party's roots rather than away from them. More pragmatically, the two strategies work as a heuristic device, reducing the potentially enormous complexity of options available to political parties. By seeing party change following an electoral shock not as individual instances but as parts of two broader recovery strategies, we can start to formulate thoughts on causal mechanisms that might get lost in all that complexity otherwise.

The 'how'-stage is the heart of the model, since this stage determines the kind of changes seen. The model seeks to explain the attitude underlying the party's behaviour. Therefore, the main explanatory variables also enter into the equation at the 'how'-stage. Electoral studies have noted various internal and environmental characteristics that relate to the strategies parties adopt. The main proposition of the model is that while the range of options available to parties might be broadened, a party's choices among these options are still influenced to a large extent by its previous path-dependent development. Attitudes towards the party's core voters and ideology among decision-makers might sway the party for either strategy. They come into play from the very moment a party starts considering how to address the defeat because this defeat has opened up more fundamental options for party change. This seems logical: quite apart from the question of whether the changes will be efficient, the kind of fundamental and more or less permanent changes that can now be considered beg the question whether they are desirable. This question of desirability in light of attitudes prevailing within the party is stronger than external strategic constraints at the outset.

However, the importance of the environment in which a party operates cannot be ignored. The strategic realities of party competition shape any electoral strategy, and therefore also a recovery strategy. In particular, the way the electoral system translates votes into seats and therefore into influence in the legislature can be expected to be a strong influence. This will be the main focus in terms of external factors. Other factors of note, such as the structure of the party system,[28] are also influenced by the electoral

28. See M. Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans.

system. By considering the electoral system, therefore, we have the advantage of studying both one of the most direct influences upon the recovery strategy but also, indirectly, other factors such as the party system.

Before moving on, it should be emphasised that what happens empirically will be a trade-off between reinforcement and extension. As noted in the literature on political parties, parties will always need to strike a balance between their core voters and "new" voters.[29] Though a pure strategy is possible in theory, therefore, empirically most parties will pursue elements of both. However, this need not be a problem. Parties can still be expected to lean one way or the other based on their characteristics and the environment in which they operate. Empirically, the balance of the mix of measures a party takes probably still adds up to a strategy leaning a certain way.

The model does not assume that parties are unitary actors. However, this plays a different role at the 'whether'-stage than at the 'how'-stage. At the 'whether'-stage, the decision that something must change may be the result of a shift in factional balance, as in Panebianco and Harmel and Janda's power-oriented change.[30] At the 'how'-stage, however, priority is given to the shared institutional heritage that a party has developed over the course of its path-dependent historical development over its factionalism. Still, while that heritage has a more or less uniform influence, it does not mean we can assume the party is a unitary actor as a result. In any party, different decision-makers will make different types of decisions. Checks and balances in the party organisation might lead decision-makers to abandon an intended course of action. For example, membership pressure not to stray too far from the party's roots might sway a national committee to abandon an intended extension strategy. However, in the framework of the study, such pressure itself is direct evidence of a loyalty to the party's ideological roots influencing the strategy.

3.4 Whether to change?

Let us examine the first stage of the process, which has been labelled the 'whether'-stage. Following Capoccia and Kelemen, we have not defined the critical juncture that is an electoral shock by its outcome of change.[31] Because of this, there is theoretically a possibility, however improbable, that change does not occur. Where this is not the case, it is most likely because a party does not see the need for a change of strategy. This is what is called 'not diagnosing' the defeat as a crisis. Since parties are attached by their nature as institutions to the way in which they conduct themselves, there will almost always exist a tendency within the party to argue that not much is wrong. In this case, the argument will often be that the party must just "do better" or "explain better" what it has done all along.[32]

from the French by B. North and R. North (London: Methuen, 1954 [1951]), 217.

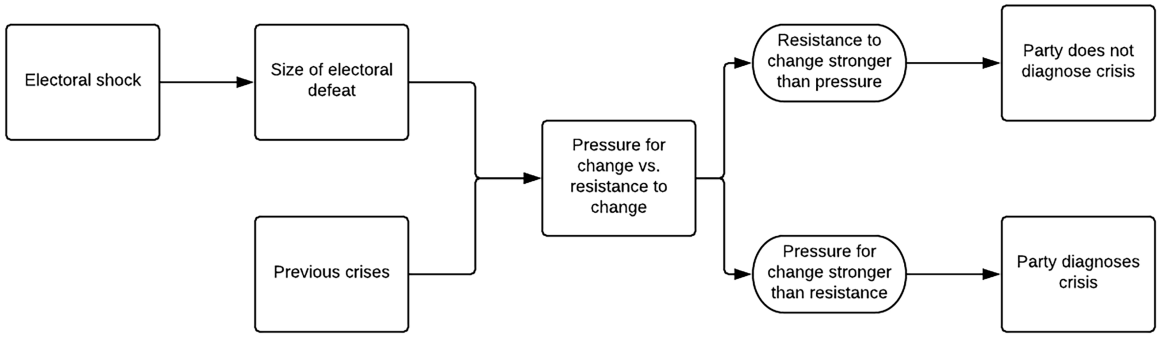
29. Van Holsteyn and Irwin, "CDA, naar voren!," 69.

30. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 244; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278.

31. Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures," 352.

32. Mair, "Adaptation and Control," 170.

Figure 3.2: The 'whether'-stage



Unsurprisingly, the way in which our model treats the 'whether'-stage builds on the main workings of the existing literature on external shocks. After all, these models have done relatively well at explaining the occurrence of change (see chapter two).[33] Up to the point where the concept of change branches out into concrete types of change, there is no reason not to use them. Party change, whether power-oriented or goal-oriented, is seen as a matter of overcoming a party's inherent resistance to change. The probability of diagnosing a crisis and accepting the need for change, then, varies with the strength of two tendencies within the party: one is 'loyalist' and argues that change is not necessary; the other arguing that it is and the shock proves it.[34] If the tendency towards change is stronger than the tendency towards stability, the balance will be in favour change, either because there is a new dominant coalition advocating it[35] or because the old dominant coalition perceives a threat to the party goals[36]. In this case, the party will accept the need for change and diagnose the crisis.

The decision on whether or not to diagnose the crisis therefore depends on how much the shock weakens the case for stability and strengthens the pressure towards change. It should be noted that it is not necessary for the advocates of change to agree what must change. This is addressed at the 'how'-stage. Essentially, causal mechanisms similar to the ones proposed by Panebianco and Harmel and Janda apply.[37] Chiefly, it is the magnitude of the defeat that makes it a shock and affects a party's goals adversely. There is also the possibility of a learning effect. These mechanisms are summarised in figure 3.2 and will be elaborated later.

Harmel and Janda propose that the poorer a party's performance in achieving its goals,

33. Panebianco, *Political Parties*; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change."

34. See Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 279.

35. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 244; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 280.

36. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278.

37. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 244; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278.

the greater the pressure for change will be.[38] As has been argued in section 3.2. above, an electoral defeat impacts on policy and office goals as well as vote goals. Therefore, the magnitude of the electoral defeat is inversely related to goal performance. The heavier the defeat, the worse a party's goal performance. Because of this, a larger proportion of votes or seats lost relative to the previous election can be seen as a greater reduction in performance towards the party's goals. As a result, we can adapt Harmel and Janda's proposition to a framework considering electoral shocks only by proposing that the more seats or votes have been lost relative to the previous election, the more likely it is that the party will diagnose the defeat in question as a crisis (proposition 1).[39]

In addition, we can propose a kind of learning effect. If the party has already experienced an electoral defeat large enough to qualify as a crisis, it will most likely already have given thought to its structural weaknesses. This approach is based on adaptive-learning models of behaviour: when parties perform in a satisfactory manner this will increase the chance that they take a certain approach once more.[40] In addition, the aspiration level which defines what is satisfactory will also vary depending on how difficult it has been for a party to achieve its aspirations.[41] As an example of how this works, consider Schumacher *et al.* on the effect of aspiration levels on risk-taking.[42] They argue that parties with high aspiration levels (and thus high hopes of office) take fewer risks than those with low aspiration levels (and little hope of office based on past performance). When a party suffers an electoral shock for the first time, it will likely have a higher aspiration level which in the course of this crisis will likely be lowered. When a second shock occurs, then, the party will be more likely to take more drastic measures and diagnose a crisis. Therefore, we can formulate proposition 2 that if a party has previously experienced a defeat which qualifies as a crisis, this will increase the probability that the party will diagnose the present crisis as well.

These two propositions represent, in effect, the way circumstances overcome the natural resistance of parties to change. From the diagnosis of the crisis onwards, it is decided that a party has to change. After this, the possibilities start to branch out and the previous models become less useful. In addition to the way it feeds into the next stage of the model, the way we have conceptualised the 'whether'-stage has another function. It allows testing the conceptual and operational definition of crisis by subjecting it to the empirical test of whether parties view a shock at a certain level of losses as a crisis or not. In the current preliminary stage of construction of the model, such information is very useful to reflect on the validity of the definition of crisis given in section 3.2. and the way it shall be operationalised in chapter 4.

38. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 280.

39. Ibid.

40. J. Bendor, D. Mookherjee, and D. Ray, "Adaptation-Based Reinforcement Learning in Repeated Interaction Games: An Overview," *International Game Theory Review* 3, nos. 2&3 (2001): 24.

41. H. A. Simon, "A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 69, no. 1 (1955): 111.

42. G. Schumacher et al., "How Aspiration to Office Conditions the Impact of Government Participation on Party Platform Change," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2015, accessed June 17, 2015, `http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ajps.12174/abstract`.

3.5 How to change?

The heart of the new model is represented by the 'how'-stage. At this stage, the party adopts a strategic attitude in the form of a reinforcement or extension strategy or a mix of these. This strategic attitude finds expression in the way the party behaves in crisis, i.e. the kind of changes that it makes. The question of the 'how'-stage, then, is simply what a party has to do to get out of a crisis. Once a crisis has been diagnosed and it has been decided that something has to change, the possibilities branch out. Even if there is agreement that change is necessary, it is not self-evident what it should look like. Our model must therefore address which variables play a role in deciding what kind of recovery strategy to pursue. Again, this exercise is both theoretical and heuristic: it serves the twin purpose of laying a theoretical foundation and developing the heuristic tools to grapple with the complexity produced by these branching possibilities.

Although Harmel and Janda offer both a power-oriented and a goal-oriented account of party change, neither of these are suited to studying the question of how a party changes after a shock.[43] No precise account of how goal-oriented change works is offered, except by stating that the changes "further the party goals" and that parties which are not democracy-maximisers are less likely to pursue organisational change. Due to the earlier development by Panebianco, the power-oriented variety of party change is better-developed.[44] A shock leads to the replacement of an old dominant coalition by a new one. This new coalition then consolidates its power, leading to changes by what is called the conformation of the dominant coalition.[45] This process is what leads to change in the power-oriented variant of party change.

However, since the new dominant coalition might not agree on exactly what has to change, this power-based causal process falls flat when it comes to explaining the occurrence of particular changes as well. Empirically, it is very hard to determine exactly who constitutes the dominant coalition and what the specific beliefs or interests of each faction are. Even assuming reasonably stable factional dynamics, making such calls a priori is very hard. In addition, categories such as programmatic change cannot be directly linked to the consolidation of power by a dominant coalition. For all these reasons, the concept of conformation of the dominant coalition is of limited use in theorising about particular changes. This presents a problem, since Harmel and Janda's goal-oriented framework is not detailed enough to formulate hypotheses on exactly which changes will ensue.[46]

This difficulty can be resolved by using the critical juncture framework. This is done by distinguishing between strategy and change. Party change is not the essence of the critical juncture, but rather its outcome or legacy.[47] The strategic aims formulated at the 'how'-stage find their concrete expression in the outcomes observed. The assumption made is that the changes are strategic. The recovery strategy underlies the changes

43. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278.
44. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 278.
45. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 279; Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 278.
46. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 279-280.
47. Cf. Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, 30; Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures," 352.

parties make, based on the voters the party looks to to recover its lost electoral potential. By making this assumption, it becomes possible to explain the concrete changes a party makes through explaining the underlying strategic choice.

As has already been discussed in the general statement of the model in section 3.3. above, these two strategies are the reinforcement and extension strategies. Conceptually, these two strategies represent two extremes of a continuum or trade-off. This trade-off, as has been mentioned, is based on Rohrschneider's mobilizing-chasing dichotomy.[48] It is, in effect, a version of this offensive/defensive trade-off reflecting the fact that rather than just the party's immediate campaign plan, more fundamental things such as party programme or ideology, organisation or long-term targeting strategies can also be changed. In section 3.5.1 below, these two strategies will be further elaborated.

Figure 3.3 shows the causal process according to our model at the 'how'-stage. Starting from where we left off, the diagnosis of crisis, it brings in two explanatory variables that impact at two different points in the causal mechanism in two different ways. Internal institutional characteristics of the party, specifically those surrounding loyalty to a defined base of core voters and to the party's ideology, can be expected to impact as a result of path-dependency. They are so fundamental to the party and its conception of itself that they impact upon the formation of preferences for a certain strategy itself. In general, the stronger the loyalty to base and/or ideology engendered by a party's past is, the likelier a party will be to prefer a reinforcement strategy.

The environment in which a party operates, particularly the electoral system, is modelled at a later stage and impacts in a different way.[49] Some circumstances might constrain a party's options by making a certain strategy less viable. Because these external factors act to constrain the preferences formed based on the internal characteristics of the party, their expected effect is to change the strategy where it runs into these constraints. Specifically, the FPTP and PR electoral systems each privilege a different strategy, constraining the other. In effect, the final strategy arrived at should therefore reflect the party's internal characteristics as changed (potentially) by the constraints of the external environment.

3.5.1 Reinforce or extend? The two strategies elaborated.

The reinforcement and extension strategies represent two conceptual categories through which the many changes a party can make in a crisis are unified and explained. As already noted in section 3.3, this serves as both a theoretical foundation and as a heuristic device designed to tackle the complex and diverse array of possible changes. By unifying all these changes into two possible recovery strategies, we provide both a theoretical starting point for the model at this stage and a way to make sense of shock-induced party change in general. The distinction between the two is drawn upon the basis of a strategic aim.

48. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 376.

49. In empirical reality, things are less black-and-white. Parties might consider both internal and external circumstances simultaneously. However, since external factors are modelled as a constraint on the preferences influenced by internal characteristics, they must be modelled as impacting after preferences have been formed by these internal characteristics.

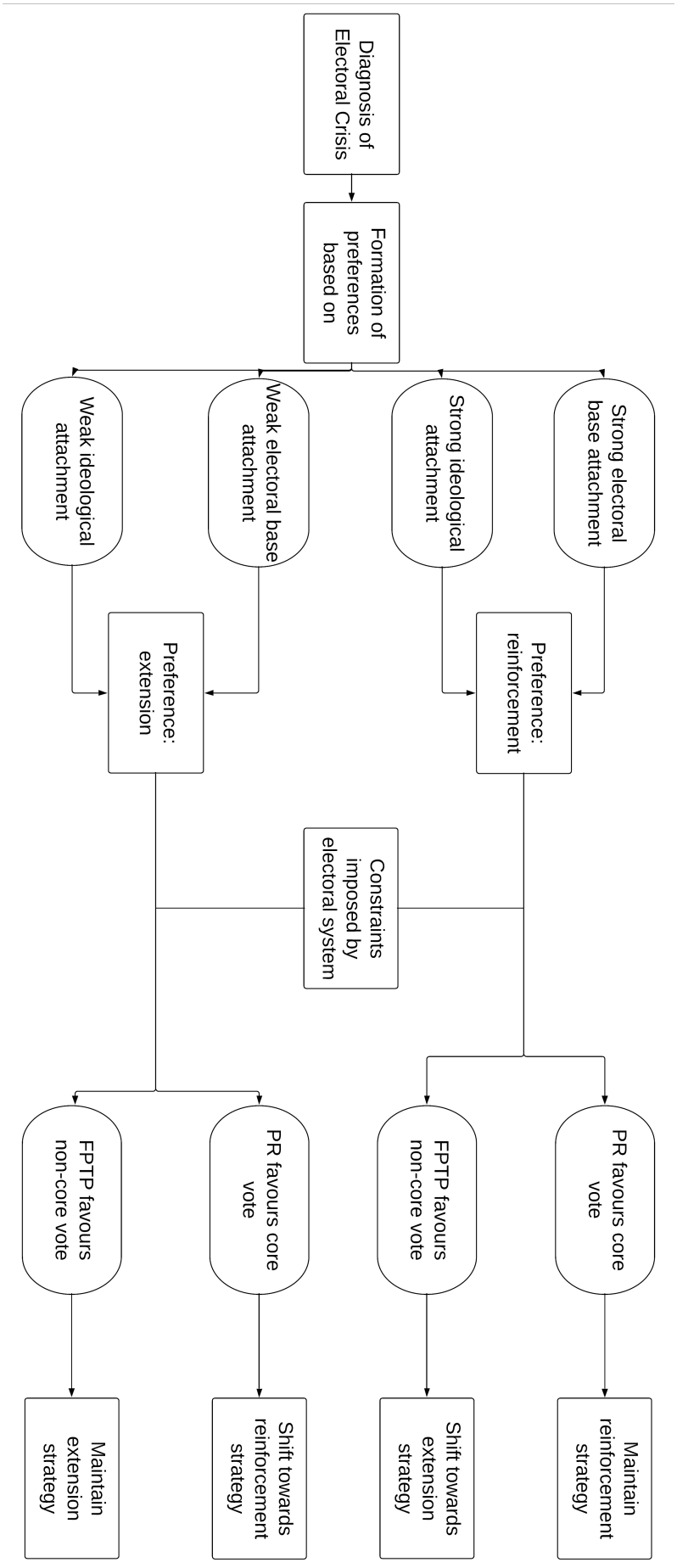


Figure 3.3: The 'how'-stage

This is essentially the same as in studies of electoral strategy: does a party primarily look towards its core voters or does it seek to broaden its appeal?

Who exactly are these core voters? Core voters shall be understood to be "normal" voters: voters who regularly give their vote to a particular party.[50] The concept of the "normal vote" represents the general baseline level of support for a political party. While this concept has been criticised, Anker showed that these critiques mainly targeted the specific operationalisation chosen in its first elaboration and not necessarily the concept itself.[51] Those belonging to the core vote may occasionally defect in unusual circumstances, but generally do not permanently switch allegiance. The opposite category of what we shall call "non-core voters" contains all those who are not core voters, but primarily refers to unaligned voters or those weakly aligned to another party. It would also involve first-time voters, but there are problems involved in this one-on-one identification between the two. After all, first-time voters are not a homogenous group: some or even most might be predisposed through their environment growing up towards a particular party. A first-time voter from the working class, for example, would be more disposed towards a social democratic party, and therefore could also be argued to be a core voter. Political socialisation is a complex process,[52] and that means that first-time voters cannot be assumed to fall under non-core voters, even if the definition would strictly speaking call for this.

This, in accordance with the literature on electoral strategy, leads to the assumption that different measures must be taken to appeal to both groups. Core voters are reached through methods that could be considered more traditional than those that would appeal to their non-core counterparts. Rohrschneider suggests that core voters are attracted by a 'mobilizing' strategy consisting of a primary focus on policies, reliance on ideological heritage, emphasis on core constituencies and an instrumental approach to organisation.[53] The opposite 'chasing' strategy focuses on votes, appeals to unaligned voters, emphasises modern technology in designing the message, emphasises leaders and considers innovation part of the message.[54]

The framework proposed by Rohrschneider cannot be used one-on-one to study parties in crisis.[55] For one, it is concerned far too much with narrow campaign strategy, that is, it takes place within the space of a single election campaign. In addition, the policy-seeking versus vote-seeking contrast he makes is odd, since this distinction speaks more to the party goals than to the content of the strategy itself. This contrast also contradicts our assumption that votes are important to all parties. Nevertheless, the essence of both strategies developed by Rohrschneider is useful: one is a defensive one using ideology and the understanding of core constituencies, the other is an offensive one using modern

50. Campbell et al., *Elections and the Political Order*, 7.
51. H. Anker, *Normal Vote Analysis* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1992), 12.
52. See for example M. McDevitt and S. Chaffee, "From Top-Down to Trickle-Up Influence: Revisiting Assumptions About the Family in Political Socialization," *Political Communication* 19, no. 3 (2002): 281–301.
53. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 376.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.

Table 3.1: Changes associated with the extension and reinforcement strategies

Dimension of change	**Extension strategy**	**Reinforcement strategy**
Organisational: How is power (re)distributed within the party?	Reduce membership influence	Increase membership influence
Programmatic: Does a party's programme emphasise its traditional values?	Downplay traditional values	Highlight traditional values
Tactical: Who does a party target?	Broader constituency	Core constituency

technology.[56] This logic can be extrapolated to the study of the measures parties take in crisis. This is how we arrive at the reinforcement-extension dichotomy.

To further structure the analysis and formulation of both strategies, the analysis is restricted to categories of party change. To Harmel and Janda, party change encompasses all self-imposed changes in party rules, structures, policies, strategies or tactics.[57] Krouwel makes a similar distinction, distinguishing between the electoral[58], programmatic and organisational elements of party in tracking the evolution of parties over time.[59] There are also similarities to the way the mobilizing-chasing dichotomy is developed.[60] These will be highlighted below where they are relevant. Because the party shocks literature is sketchy on the details of individual changes, the conceptualisation below shall draw on the way in which Krouwel conceptualises these dimensions.[61] To avoid confusion, Krouwel's electoral dimension has been relabelled the tactical dimension. The entire strategy is, after all, electoral, and this term would better reflect that this particular dimension of change is concerned with tactical matters such as targeting. The conceptualisation shall be offered in the form of a series of questions with two possible answers, one for the extension and one for the reinforcement strategy. An overview of the conceptualization of both strategies on each dimension is given in table 3.1.

56. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 376.
57. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 277.
58. Krouwel refers to this dimension in this way because his work is concerned with transformation over time and he looks at the changing constituency of a party. I have opted for the term "tactical" because we're arguing from the perspective of the party, and "tactical" seems a better term to denote that this is just an attempt by the party to change its constituency. Electoral change in Krouwel's term is the macro-level result of our "tactical changes" at the party micro-level.
59. A. Krouwel, *Party Transformations in European Democracies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 8-9.
60. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 376.
61. Krouwel, *Party Transformations in European Democracies*, 30.

3.5.1.1 The organisational dimension

The party organisation could change in a number of ways impacting or reflecting the balance of power within the party, but only where actions are taken that can be said to directly affect the appeal of a party to either its core voters or a broader constituency does it figure directly in the conceptualisation of strategy. We can make the link by looking again at research testing May's law. Norris found that rather than being more radical than both leaders and voters, party members and officers were actually in between the two.[62] Testing May's Law in the Netherlands, Van Holsteyn *et al.* found a mixed picture which casts doubt on May's Law and is rather more complicated than the one presented by Norris.[63] They do, however, suggest that if a group deviates from the consensus among voters, members and MPs, it is the MPs rather than the membership.[64] If this is the case, members link the leadership to its core voter base. As such, any move to increase the influence of rank-and-file party members can be considered part of the reinforcement strategy. Conversely, decreasing the influence of rank-and-file party members can be considered part of the extension strategy.

This has also been argued by Katz and Cross, who observed that one side of intra-party democracy for parties represented the chance to get more in touch with public opinion and turn passive supporters into active participants.[65] It has also been shown that internal democratisation, such as giving party members a greater say in candidate selection or policy formation, is part of this. The opposite, internal de-democratisation which might be expressed in powers that make the leadership more autonomous from coalitions among the rank and file, is therefore part of the extension strategy.[66]

In a similar fashion, we can say that the recent development in which some parties open up their selection and policy formulation processes to the public at large and sympathisers who are not members, which can be described as external democratisation of the party, is part of the extension strategy. Since this opens up influence in the party to those outside of its membership, it can make the party more appealing to and in touch with both its core voters (who might become members) and non-core voters, at the cost of the exclusiveness of membership, thereby reducing the influence of rank-and-file members. This also matches Rohrschneider's account of the role of organisation in electoral strategy, where organisational innovation is a part of the message. Research conducted on this diversification of options to get involved in party politics has shown that parties do in fact use these measures to reach out to broader groups.[67] After all, it allows those on the

62. P. Norris, "May's Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited: Leaders, Officers, Members and Voters in British Political Parties," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995): 42.

63. J. J. M. Van Holsteyn, J. M. den Ridder, and R. A. Koole, "From May's Laws to May's legacy: On the opinion structure within political parties," *Party Politics* 23, no. 5 (2017): 477.

64. Ibid., 479.

65. R. S. Katz and W. P. Cross, "Problematizing Intra-Party Democracy," in *The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy*, ed. W. P. Cross and R. S. Katz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 171.

66. See Thomas Poguntke and Paul Webb, "The Presidentialization of Politics in Democratic Societies," in *The Presidentialization of Politics* (2005), 9, ISBN: 9780199252015, doi:10.1093/0199252017.003.0001.

67. S. E. Scarrow, *Multi-Speed Membership Parties: Evidence and Implications*, 2014, Paper prepared for "Contemporary Meanings of Party Membership", ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Salamanca, Spain, April 10-15, 2014., 21.

verges of the party but quite outside its traditional appeal, a role in the party and might thus naturally act to extend the party's appeal.[68]

3.5.1.2 The programmatic dimension

The programmatic dimension presents a challenge in that there are various ways in which it can be conceptualised. It is clear that it is concerned with the programme of a political party, but for the purpose of the analysis, there are various ways in which that programme can be and has been defined. Chiefly, the distinction here is between a position-based approach and one based on saliency. In practice, most contributions to the party platform change literature use the quantitative data generated by the Comparative Manifesto Project, which can be said to measure saliency first and foremost, since it counts the number of quasi-sentences devoted to certain policies.[69]

A position-based approach has one major drawback in terms of the conceptual distinction between an extension and a reinforcement version of programmatic changes. It would require making an assumption about the preferences of (former) supporters for either more radical or more moderate policies. May's law of curvilinear disparity does argue that a party's voters are generally more moderate than both leaders and sub-leaders, a broad category including all non-leadership members.[70] However, it has been questioned whether this is the case empirically.[71] The alternative would require some form of data on the preferences of party members as well as voters, which would limit the availability of data and might not offer a similar picture.

This study will therefore take a saliency approach. According to Rohrschneider, the mobilizing strategy sees its programme structured by ideology, while the chasing strategy adopts a programmatic message based around modern technology.[72] This can be translated into a salience approach based around the prevalence of traditional party themes and values in the party's programme. Are traditional (ideological) values and themes downplayed or highlighted? What values or themes are traditional can be distilled from the secondary literature on party history and where available on evidence on elite perceptions in primary sources. As a consequence, this also means that issues can be traditional if a currently influential faction within the party interprets them as being part of the party's traditions. A programmatic change that is part of the reinforcement strategy will highlight the party's traditional values and themes, while the extension strategy will be characterised by changes to the programme to downplay these elements.

Most radically, this applies to the party ideology itself. A sufficiently heavy defeat might lead a party to make efforts to change their ideological foundations to de-emphasise traditional elements and emphasise new additions which might be more in tune with the general spirit of the times, or "go back to its roots" and reaffirm certain core commitments.

68. Katz and Cross, "Problematizing Intra-Party Democracy," 175.

69. Volkens et al., *The Manifesto Data Collection: Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR).*

70. J. D. May, "Opinion Structure of Political Parties: the Special Law of Curvilinear Disparity," *Political Studies* 21, no. 2 (1973): 139.

71. Norris, "May's Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited," 42; Van Holsteyn, Ridder, and Koole, "From May's Laws to May's legacy," 477.

72. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 376.

Since ideology refers to the entire belief system of a party (as defined by Mair and Mudde, see also 3.5.2.2. below), this is a very fundamental change and therefore the furthest extent of either strategy in terms of programme.[73]

3.5.1.3 The tactical dimension

The tactical dimension revolves around the electoral tactics of a party, and is therefore closely related to the overall choice of strategy. The question is, then, whether it is not a category of a different order than the rest. This is, however, not the case, since the full extent of each strategy is only reached if a certain direction on the tactical dimension is accompanied by matching measures in other dimensions. The tactical dimension describes above all the party's intended targets as expressed in its campaigning actions and relationships with society. Without accompanying moves in other dimensions, even if a party picks a broader focus for its electoral tactics, it is therefore still theoretically possible for a party to lean more in the direction of a reinforcement strategy.

Krouwel defines what he calls the electoral dimension in terms of the "size, stability and social structure" of electoral appeal and support.[74] Transformed into a form suitable to define the recovery strategy of a political party in terms of our model, this leads to a definition of the tactical dimension of the recovery strategy as that part of the strategy concerned with the decision whether to target a narrower or a broader electoral base. The former is part of the reinforcement strategy, and conceptually represents a party adopting a renewed focus on its existing supporters and those matching their profile. The latter is part of the extension strategy, and represents a party actively undertaking actions to broaden their constituency. Unlike the two strategies themselves, this definition does include efforts to win the support of certain groups for a single election.

The heightened contingency of a critical juncture means that measures on the tactical dimension go beyond electoral strategy. Though campaign plans cannot be ignored as a part of the tactical dimension, this conceptualisation also looks explicitly for more long-term measures. For example, a party might create a new organisation to durably strengthen its appeal to a certain group. The most powerful instances of tactical change are those where not just the internal targeting strategy is adjusted, but where the party's externally visible symbols are changed to create an image that is either more inclusive of a broader array of groups or more exclusive and reaffirming the traditional image. The strongest example of this would be a change of the party logo and house style explicitly to convey such an image. It should be noted, however, that not all changes of logo are part of any particular strategy: an update to 'modernise' the party logo without any intention of changing the image is not part of either strategy. These varying degrees of changes to the campaign targeting strategies, long-term targeting initiatives and changes to party symbols and slates of candidates together form the tactical dimension of the strategy.

73. P. Mair and C. Mudde, "The Party Family and its Study," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): 220.

74. Krouwel, *Party Transformations in European Democracies*, 33.

3.5.2 Internal characteristics: electoral base attachment and ideological attachment

Let us now turn to the explanatory variables. These enter in two sub-stages: preference formation and constraints on those preferences. This sub-section takes a closer look at the way in which various internal institutional characteristics of a party affecting its ties to its ideology and its core voters impact the formation of a preference for either strategy. The literature locates the causes of change primarily in threats to the conformation or primary goal of the dominant coalition.[75] However, as has been argued above, these accounts have proven better at explaining the occurrence of change than explaining exactly what changes are made. It seems useful to elaborate a new perspective on what the resistance of political parties to change consists of, and the role that it can play in structuring a goal-oriented push towards change.

The alternative our model presents is essentially a path-dependency argument. As institutions, parties develop certain distinct characteristics which are imbued with value over the course of their history. The resistance of parties to change which forms a core part of the external shocks literature can be said to consist, at the level of each individual party, of the value attached to certain characteristics of the party by its members and elites. Because these characteristics have sustained the party for a long time, it has become increasingly difficult to steer away from them.[76] It is entirely conceivable that even an electoral shock does not necessarily break the party's path-dependent development. Therefore, we assume that a party's preferences are still at least partly shaped by these traits in a crisis unless external circumstances compounding the shock (see 3.5.4. below) overrule it.

This means that the influence of a party's institutional traits comes in earlier than any external characteristics. Of course, the two can never really be separated this strictly in practice. However, it is empirically as well as theoretically plausible that internal factors predominate at an early stage. After all, parties which experience a crisis often enter a period of factional conflict about what the party is and who it is for. In this way, these questions become the more immediate ones as a party evaluates the defeat. This factional conflict also makes it more dangerous to steer away from the common denominator of practices which keep the party together. This is another reason why path-dependence even in a crisis should not be underestimated.[77]

Since the strategy choice is expressed in terms of appealing to core or non-core voters, the institutional characteristics that influence preference formation relate primarily to the attitude a party takes towards these core voters. If a party feels strongly attached to a normative role as traditional champions of a particular social group, then that would make them less well-disposed towards directing focus away from such a group. More broadly, a party's attachment to its traditions also plays a role, since it is these traditions that

75. Panebianco, *Political Parties*; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278.

76. See P. Pierson, "Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (2000): 261.

77. See Pierson, "Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics"; Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*.

have to be reaffirmed or sacrificed to add breadth of support. This can be expressed by the strength of a party's attachment to its ideological heritage alongside its electoral base attachment. These two variables will be conceptualized in turn below, after which propositions will be formulated about the effect of each of them on the overall choice of strategy.

3.5.2.1 Electoral base attachment

Defined in terms of the normal vote, the group of core voters or electoral base of the party consists of long-term supporters of each party. To the party, then, there is such a thing as a base: the core group of voters on which the party has relied in the past. Since the choice of strategy relates to the approach taken to this base, the attitude towards this group is a key variable. In particular, the preferences formed by each party are bound to be influenced not just by the electoral importance of the base, but by the institutional loyalties to these core voters formed over the course of the party's history. Such influences of a party's social origins and the way they developed throughout a party's history have been a recurring theme in the party types literature since Duverger.[78]

The clearest expression of the idea that a party is based on a certain segment of society is found with Lipset and Rokkan, who introduced the influential idea of parties formed on the basis of social cleavages.[79] In the party change literature, the changing relationship of a party to its social base is one of the main themes of the party types literature. The concept of party-voter linkage is also related.[80] On the level of the individual voter, belonging to a party's electoral base is expressed in the form of party identification, a form of emotional attachment to the party. This is the form in which the link between a party and its core voters usually figures in the scholarly literature, because it is usually discussed in the context of party electoral strategy and why voters support parties.[81]

It is not necessary for our purposes to define core voters in terms of party identification. Voters are not the unit of analysis under study, and going into such detail about an attitude such as party identification adds little to the way a certain loyalty is expressed in voting behaviour. What does matter is the inverse of this usual form of linkage between party and core voters. Just like a voter can feel loyal to a party, a party can also feel loyal to its supporters. Given the nature of parties as institutions, this loyalty is the result of a party's history and institutional development. The continued reliance on the support of certain core voters can be expected, in most parties, to breed a path-dependent attachment to this electoral base. This attachment is always to a group, since parties cannot possibly appeal to voters as unique individuals.[82] As an institutionalised characteristic, it is expressed

78. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 63-64; see also O. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. J. LaPalombara and M. Weiner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 190; R. S. Katz and P. Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: the Emergence of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995): 5–28.

79. Lipset and Rokkan, *Party Systems and voter alignments*, 5-6.

80. See R. S. Katz, "Party as linkage: a vestigial function?," *European Journal of Political Research* 18, no. 1 (1990): 143–161.

81. P.E. Converse, "The Concept of a Normal Vote," in *Elections and the Political Order*, ed. A. Campbell et al. (New York: John Wiley / Sons, 1966), 21; Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 373-374.

82. See also M. Thau, "How Political Parties Use Group-Based Appeals: Evidence from Britain 1964–

in formal rules such as party constitutions as well as in more informal ways such as personal ties, norms and values.[83] Electoral base attachment can therefore be defined as the strength of attachment of a party's decision-making elite to (parts of) its electoral base through formal rules as well as informal values and ties.

The relationship between electoral base attachment and the choice of strategy at the 'how'-stage should be self-evident. Parties are institutions following a path-dependent pattern of development, and this path-dependence persists even in crisis. Parties with stronger electoral base attachment should therefore develop a preference to remain loyal to their electoral base in the form of a reinforcement strategy. Lacking such strong attachment, parties less attached to their core voters have less incentive to do so, and might find it an easier option to broaden their support through the extension strategy. Therefore, proposition 3 relating to electoral base attachment is as follows: parties with higher levels of electoral base attachment will be more inclined towards a reinforcement strategy, whereas parties with lower levels of electoral base attachment will be more inclined towards an extension strategy.

This basic conceptualisation of electoral base attachment will be extended below by discussing both the formal and informal expressions of electoral base attachment. While personal ties to a party's core electorate are technically not formal in the sense that they appear as solid rules, they are nevertheless treated together with formal electoral base attachment. The reason for this is that unlike other informal forms of electoral base attachment like norms and conventions, personal ties are immediately observable. This is not the case for norms and conventions, which only become apparent in the expressed attitudes of party decision-makers.

Electoral base attachment by formal rules is characterized by the existence of formal ties between a party and an organization representing (parts of) its core electorate. A classic example is the British Labour Party, which originated as a mass party of the unionized working-class and is characterized by the enduring formal influence of the unions in its governance. This is not just the most clear-cut way of recognizing electoral base attachment, but also potentially its strongest form. In all other ways in which a party can be attached to its base, the ties to the group in question stop short of formal power. With formal rules guaranteeing the influence of an organization representing (parts of) the core electorate, however, such organisations can actually enforce a certain degree of loyalty to the group they represent on the party. Even when they do not do so, their presence is probably enough to guarantee continued attention to the needs of the group of core voters so represented. Therefore, parties featuring such arrangements will most often have high degrees of electoral base attachment and have a stronger preference for a reinforcement strategy.

One step below electoral base attachment by formal rules is what one might call electoral base attachment by personal ties. Here, there are no formal ties with the organizations representing (parts of) the core electorate, but decision-makers within the party often also have positions in or (former) ties to these organisations. Lijphart's concept of interlocking

2015," *Political Studies*, December 2017, 003232171774449, doi:10.1177/0032321717744495.

83. W. R. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas and Interests* (London: SAGE, 2008), 50-51.

directorates provides a strong example of what this looks like.[84] However, even if the decision-makers are independent from the organisations representing (parts of) the core electorate, they nevertheless are bound to share some of the norms of the organisations they have ties with. This leads to closer ties between the party and its core electorate than where such personal ties do not exist. This, then, heightens the degree of electoral base attachment and also the likelihood of a preference for a reinforcement strategy.

Electoral base attachment by informal norms and conventions is the most variable and malleable form. Instead of being expressed in formal rules or personal ties, it is characterized by the prevalence of informal norms and conventions among party decision-makers about which groups constitute the core electorate and whether the party should be loyal to them. This must therefore be inferred from the stated opinions of decision-makers. Such norms might be a result of the party's ideology.[85] For instance, socialist parties will often have a normative attachment to working class interests, while Christian Democratic parties often have links with Christian voters.[86]

Interestingly, while formal and personal ties can only strengthen electoral base attachment, informal norms can both strengthen and weaken it. Formal ties and personal ties can only strengthen attachment, since they exert outside influence on the party. Since the very existence of these ties constitutes a special relationship with such organisations, they cannot at the same time signify that a party is against such special relationships. However, this does not go for informal ties, which can go both ways. It is just as easy to imagine a norm that states a party should serve the interests of a particular group in society as to imagine the opposite: a norm that states a party should not serve any particular interest. An example of this is the Dutch D66, which throughout its history has taken great pains to prevent being seen as an "interest party". Parties which have such norms in the absence of any stronger attachment through formal or personal ties have the weakest possible electoral base attachment.

3.5.2.2 Ideological attachment

Although some theorists prefer not to encumber parties with the concept of ideology and argue that their positioning is merely strategic in a vote-maximising way,[87] most of the literature from some of the earliest contributions[88] on assumes parties have an ideological belief system. The concept of ideology has been variously defined in political science literature. Budge and Robertson, for example, present a spatial conception of ideology looking for the principal dimensions of partisan competition, principally the left-right distinction.[89] This generally leads to the assumption that the more extreme a party is on such a dimension, the more ideological it is.[90] Others see ideology as an institutional

84. A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 61.

85. A. Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 22.

86. K. Von Beyme, *Politische Parteien in westlichen Demokratien* (München: Piper, 1984), 97-98.

87. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 28.

88. E.g. M. Ostrogorski, *La Démocratie et les Partis Politiques* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1912).

89. Budge and Robertson, "Do Parties Differ, and How?"

90. See for example J. Rovny, "Who Emphasizes and Who Blurs? Party Strategies Under Multidimensional Competition," *European Union Politics* 13, no. 2 (2012): 275.

characteristic of a party that has developed over its history.[91]

Mair and Mudde extend this further, seeing ideology as part of a party's identity.[92] This latter view is the one most suited to the present inquiry, since the internal factors in the model represent the impact of the previous institutional development of a party on its actions in a crisis. In such a path-dependence argument, it is useful to see ideology as a part of a party's identity rather than just as a function of its position in a spatial spectrum. It is not so much what the party's ideology is substantially that drives changes, but rather how important it is and has been to the party and its decision-makers. This is an element that is lacking in definitions which cast ideology in terms of dimensions underlying the space of party competition[93] or as any collectively held vision of an ideal society.[94] We therefore adopt the conceptualisation used by Mair and Mudde of ideology as "the characterisation of a belief system that goes to the heart of a party's identity".[95] Ideology defines what parties are rather than what they do.

The conceptualisation given above derives from a party families perspective, which does not specify the depth of ideological attachment. A separate conceptualisation of ideological attachment will be necessary. Some, such as Sartori, have attempted to construct a scale of the extent of ideological motivation of parties by opposing it to pragmatism.[96] However, when acting on the definition of ideology adopted above, we have to carefully distinguish pragmatism as a belief system (which could very well be ideology in that sense) from sheer electoral opportunism. Sartori does this, to some extent, by disentangling spoils motivations from the ideological dimension.[97]

This means pragmatism or moderatism can be ideologies in their own right under the chosen definition. As a result, ideological motivation or attachment cannot be conceptualised by opposing it to pragmatism or moderatism. While radical ideological stances seem logically associated with a high degree of ideological attachment, moderatism or pragmatism is not necessarily associated with the lower end of the scale. The key is therefore to conceptualise ideological attachment not in terms of the ideological content, but in terms of its prevalence among the party's motivations. Therefore, ideological attachment is conceptualised as the degree to which party decision-makers are attached to or motivated by their party's structured belief system in deliberation and decision-making. Much like electoral base attachment expresses the loyalty of a party to its electoral base, ideological attachment therefore expresses the loyalty of a party and its decision-makers to their ideological belief system.

The institutional and historical way in which ideology is conceptualised here makes ideology a conservative force in the process of party recovery, inclining strongly ideological parties to a reinforcement strategy. Elites which are strongly attached to ideology might

91. Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems*, 22ff. Von Beyme, *Politische Parteien in westlichen Demokratien*, 43-45.

92. Mair and Mudde, "The Party Family and its Study," 220.

93. For example: Budge and Robertson, "Do Parties Differ, and How?"

94. For example: M.B. Hamilton, "The Elements of the Concept of Ideology," *Political Studies* 35, no. 1 (1987): 38.

95. Mair and Mudde, "The Party Family and its Study," 220.

96. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems*, 78.

97. Ibid., 77-78.

be less willing to change the party's ways, as doing so might weaken or contravene the party's ideological narrative. This is of course strongest on the programmatic dimension, where a party's traditional values are directly at stake. However, we can also plausibly argue that broadening the base or shifting power within the party away from the members who have by their membership committed to this ideology might introduce demands and influences which threaten the party's ideological heritage as well. For example, a broader base might require sacrificing ideological purity for electoral reasons. Evidence on party responsiveness takes a similar reading, finding that niche parties, which are often more radical, gear their programmatic shifts to shifts in the opinions of their supporters rather than of the electorate as a whole.[98] If part of a party's institutional makeup, ideology acts as an inhibitor on the variant of change that swings away from a party's origins. Therefore, it is proposed that parties with high degrees of ideological attachment will be more likely to pursue a reinforcement strategy, whereas parties with lower degrees of ideological attachment will be more likely to pursue an extension strategy (proposition 4).

3.5.2.3 Relative importance of various internal factors

The propositions on electoral base attachment and ideological attachment formulated above seem clear enough, but there is still one question remaining: if a party is, for instance, highly ideological but has a weak electoral base attachment, or vice versa, which of the two influences is the strongest? Though this is an empirical question it is nevertheless good to look at it from a theoretical angle as well. The question here is when certain variables will take precedence over others.

To resolve this, the choice has been made to disaggregate the strategies into their components, taking advantage of the distinction between them, much like Bale did by seeking to link changes in the public face of the party, organisational change and policy changes separately to his three drivers of change (defeat, leadership and dominant faction).[99] The tactical dimension, being concerned with measures to directly broaden or narrow down a party's appeal, is obviously more closely related to electoral base attachment than to ideological attachment. The organisational dimension is also more closely related to electoral base attachment than to ideological attachment since, as we have recounted in 3.5.1.1. above, the members of a party often form a link to its voters. Likewise, since the programmatic dimension concerns the programmatic emphasis of a party, it seems likely that the attachment to the ideology underlying that programme is more influential than attachment to the electoral base. This leads to proposition 5: electoral base attachment impacts the organisational and tactical dimensions more than the programmatic dimension, while ideological attachment impacts the programmatic dimension more than the organisational and tactical dimensions.

In order to demonstrate this, we can formulate a concrete expectation as to how each dimension should turn out for this to be the case. If proposition 5 as a whole is correct, then in each case the organisational and tactical dimensions should line up with the party's

98. L. Ezrow et al., "Mean voter representation and partisan constituency representation: Do parties respond to the mean voter position or to their supporters?," *Party Politics* 17, no. 3 (2011): 288.

99. Bale, *The Conservatives Since 1945*, 10; 313ff.

electoral base attachment, whereas the programmatic dimension should follow the party's ideological attachment. This leads to a subdivision of the proposition into three sub-propositions. Proposition 5a states that stronger electoral base attachment should lead to organisational reforms shifting power towards the members (reinforcement), while weaker electoral base attachment should lead to the opposite, parties shifting power away from the members (extension). The same is stated for the tactical dimension in proposition 5b: stronger electoral base attachment should lead to a predominantly reinforcing strategy (focusing on the core constituency) whereas weaker electoral base attachment should lead to an extending strategy on this dimension (and hence a focus on a broader constituency). Finally, proposition 5c states the concrete expectation about ideological attachment and the programmatic dimension: parties that have stronger ideological attachment tend to highlight their traditional values, whereas parties that have weaker ideological attachment tend to downplay them.

Although they are a way to resolve the problem of having to distinguish between the strengths of the various influences, these separate relationships between electoral base attachment and ideological attachment on the one hand and a specific dimension of the recovery strategy on the other theoretically would also apply where these two independent variables point in the same direction. After all, the same logic expressed above also underlies propositions 3 and 4, which presume a unified effect: if ideological attachment and electoral base attachment line up, then there should be either a reinforcement or an extension strategy on all dimensions at the same time. Even where electoral base attachment and ideological attachment do point in the same direction, there is a practical advantage to disaggregating as in propositions 5a through 5c: since the reality is bound to be complex, looking at each dimension separately could also help localise areas in which the model runs into problems. This is invaluable information for refining what is, after all, a tentative model. This way of dealing with the potentially contradictory effects of propositions 3 and 4 also has the key advantage that it requires no further concepts and variables (such as party goals or factional dynamics) to be added to the model. It also seems an adequate first step towards one of the aims of the model, which is to explain the presence or absence of certain types of change in varying contexts.

Finally, let us briefly touch upon the matter of faction dynamics. It is characteristic of the external shocks literature that external shocks produce factional struggle.[100] Why are the influences of electoral base attachment or ideological attachment uniform, even amidst a factional power struggle? In part, these influences can be expected to operate uniformly because they reflect a common denominator the party is looking towards in order to put the period of internal strife behind it. If these factors are strong enough, they might facilitate the formation of a dominant coalition behind a unified reinforcement or extension strategy on all dimensions. Elements of such a strategy are more likely to remain in place even after external pressure. If not, then the picture emerging from this first stage will inevitably be a compromise or simply reflect the different perspectives of those with influence over the various dimensions in a piecemeal manner.

100. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278; Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 243-244.

3.5.3 A functional alternative: the identity of defectors

Before moving on to the external environment, let us highlight once more that the main thrust of our model is institutionalist. According to our model, it is the institutional characteristics of a party, developed over its past existence, that determines the mix of measures pursued. There is, however, a rival explanation, which is a more functional interpretation of goal-oriented change: the party simply does what is functional to secure its goals. This is in essence a very strict interpretation of Harmel and Janda's concept of goal-oriented change.[101] In this interpretation, there is no question what a party's goal should be: it should win back the votes it has lost in the shock election. If this is the case, the identity of defectors should be a better explanation than the internal characteristics given as independent variables in propositions 3 and 4. If it is not, this would be a good indication that parties' actions in crisis are influenced by institutional characteristics as we have argued.

Therefore, it should make a difference whether the voters lost by the party can be perceived to be non-core voters withdrawing their support for the party or defecting core voters. In the latter case, the party is in danger of losing these defectors in a more durable way. It stands to reason that any party acting deliberately to regain their electoral position from before the crisis election would pursue a strategy which relates to the voters they lost. Therefore, where more non-core voters are lost, one can expect that the party will lean towards an extension strategy, whereas a party which loses more core voters can be expected to lean towards a reinforcement strategy. This will be treated in each of the subsequent results chapters as a characteristic of the shock election. It operates via a slightly different causal mechanism than the electoral system in that it doesn't so much impose constraints on preferences but rather sets different goals these preferences must achieve. The hypothetical impact of this functional consideration therefore operates in a way similar to the impact of institutional characteristics in the model: the question is whether a party's preferences are determined by its institutional characteristics or by what is necessary to regain the allegiance of voters lost in the shock election.

Let us briefly consider two examples to show the logic of this proposition.[102] Party A has had 35% of the vote at election t-2, and has always been around this level. At election t-1, let's say it slightly increased its vote to 37%. Then, at election t which formed the electoral shock, it fell to 20% of the vote. Most of its vote loss must consist of voters who have supported the party in both elections t-1 and t-2 but who have now defected. For this reason, the logical reaction would be for the party to try to reassure its core voters by opting for a reinforcement strategy.

Compare this with party B. Party B has always been a rather smaller party, and at t-2 it had 10% of the vote. At t-1, circumstances conspired in favour of the party, and it increased its share to 15%. Then, at the shock election t, the party fell back to 8%. In this shock defeat, it seems most likely to assume that the party believes it has lost the allegiance of all the non-core voters it had gained at election t-1 over the core voters it had, given the fact that the core voters have shown more loyalty to the party in the past.

101. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278.
102. Both examples assume equal turnout.

In this case, it is likely that party B, all else being equal, would tend towards an extension strategy to try to entice these temporary defectors back.

Of course, a party cannot know precisely which voters it has lost in a secret ballot, although it can make an approximation based on polling. However, it is reasonable to presume that since core voters are on the whole more loyal to their party than non-core voters, non-core voters will desert first. By the time core voters defect in large numbers, the non-core vote will likely be depleted already. Consider these two examples. Party A might have lost some non-core voters, but its normal performance being way above its performance at shock election t will strongly suggest that core voters are deserting as well, since there are not all that many non-core voters to lose. Party B might have lost some of its core vote. In fact, there is 2% that can only come from the core vote. However, since its performance at elections before t-1 was only slightly above performance at the shock election t, it seems logical to assume the larger part of the votes lost were not core voters. This is the result of the loyalty of the core voters which comprise the normal vote: for a party elite in a crisis, lacking evidence to the contrary, the loyalty of core voters seems a more plausible assumption to make than their mass defection, leaving a party with only non-core voters.

3.5.4 External environment

Where the internal institutional development of a party influences the formulation of preferences directly, the external environment works as a constraint. Because of the effects of institutions such as electoral and party systems, certain strategies may be constrained and parties in pursuit of recovery might be pressured towards other strategies. In other words: a party might form preferences making it want to do X, but in the end it will do Y because it is forced in that direction by the environment in which it operates. Seeing institutions as constraints on behaviour in such a way is a staple of neo-institutionalism.[103]

Argued from the path-dependency perspective used in the discussion of internal characteristics above, the external environment can compound the shock in such a way that a party's preferences might be overruled.[104] Essentially, external factors impact the costs and benefits of a certain strategy. If this impact is large enough, it can potentially increase the expected benefits of a strategy that would run counter to the party's institutional inclinations. If this is the case, the high costs of changing away that are the hallmark of path-dependency can be overcome, causing a party to switch trajectories.[105]

The underlying assumption is that external factors enter into consideration later than internal factors. This is the result of the usual strength of the path-dependent patterns of development, that is, of a party's general resistance to change. It further results from the tendency parties have to turn inward after losing heavily in an attempt to regroup amidst factional strife. For all these reasons, the effect of the external environment may not filter into the strategy until later on in the process. It may even take a new defeat to drive the

103. P. A. Hall and R. C. R. Taylor, "Political science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 943.

104. Cf. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change"; Panebianco, *Political Parties*.

105. As argued by Pierson, "Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics," 261.

point home. In any case, since external factors act as constraints on internally-formed preferences in the account given by our model, this assumption can be justified, even if it is to some extent an oversimplification.

Since the main goal of a party in crisis is to recover, this also influences how external factors constrain the strategies. It is proposed that parties operating in an environment which constrains the capacity to recover through an appeal to their core vote will be more likely to pursue an extension strategy, whereas an environment that does not do so makes parties more likely to pursue a reinforcement strategy. It should be clear from this general proposition that the kind of external factors looked at centre around the institutional context a party operates in, particularly the electoral system. After all, it is the electoral system that translates votes into seats, and therefore into power and influence.

The choice has been made to treat other external factors, such as the party system, as background variables related to the electoral system. There are multiple theoretical and practical reasons for this. First of all, other external variables such as the behaviour of competitors and in particular the party system are often quite strongly related to the electoral system. According to Duverger's Law, the number of parties in the party system is after all caused by the electoral system.[106] Seeing factors such as the party system in light of the electoral system also has the practical benefit that it limits the complexity of various influences working on parties at the same time, which is crucial so as not to overcomplicate the model at this stage of theory development. In other words: the electoral system can be expected to impact strongly on most aspects of the behaviour of parties, including such patterns of behaviour such as inter-party competition and the party system, because the electoral system presents a very direct influence upon party behaviour in a democracy. This means it is, at least for the initial stage of theory development we are in, the best external factor to use as an independent variable.

3.5.4.1 Electoral system

Many characteristics of the electoral system can impact upon the choices made by a party in crisis, but the manifold details of each country's electoral system such as district magnitude, type of electoral system, openness of party lists, electoral thresholds, etc., cannot possibly all be included separately in the model at this stage (and some may not even be relevant). The most important distinction is undoubtedly the one which categorises electoral systems by the way in which they translate votes into seats, delivering a distinction between majoritarian systems and proportional systems.[107]

The rules by which votes are translated into seats are crucial because they affect a party's chances to win office or increase its influence in the legislature. Especially in certain systems where votes do not transfer proportionally into seats, seats are the dominant way in which electoral progress is expressed. The psychological effect by which parties anticipate these mechanical effects of the electoral system is crucial: the more the system gives weight to the votes of certain people over others, the more a party will feel

106. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 217.
107. Ibid., 204-205.

constrained in who it seeks to appeal to.[108]

This has led Rohrschneider to link certain institutions to certain electoral strategies.[109] In most majoritarian electoral systems, he argues, parties have more incentives to go after unaligned voters who might decide the election. Core voters, by contrast, may be restricted in their opportunities to defect, rendering the normal vote more stable. By contrast, a proportional system, according Rohrschneider, rewards a strategy geared towards core voters, since it is easier for them to defect to ideologically-proximate parties.[110] Though the reasoning is slightly overgeneralised and also makes assumptions about the number of parties, it is nevertheless plausible. For one, it is more often than not the case that a proportional system coincides with a multi-party system while there are fewer parties in First Past the Post systems.

Argued in another way, the understanding of the normal vote makes a hypothesis that majoritarian electoral systems lead to an extension strategy and proportional ones to a reinforcement strategy plausible. Especially in a majoritarian electoral system with single-member districts, the geographical distribution of the vote is important. Most core voters will be concentrated in a number of safe seats, where defection is unlikely to be successful and rather unattractive. In more competitive seats, which are the ones that will ultimately allow a party to regain seats, the normal vote of contesting parties is much smaller, but the long-term loyalty that is expressed in the concept of the normal vote also makes defection more costly. It therefore becomes more logical to increase attractiveness to non-core voters, as they can potentially swing these decisive contests, while the core voter can only prevent losses.

Likewise, in a proportional system, the vote translates into seats in a more proportional way, such that it matters less who a voter is and where he lives. Since, even with thresholds in place, a defection by a core voter has a more direct impact on the distribution of seats, it becomes more important to defend a party's core vote from potential competitors (which may or may not be more numerous than in a plurality system), and more hazardous to risk their defection by diverting attention to non-core voters. This would then increase the costs of an extension strategy and make a reinforcement strategy more likely.

Therefore, parties operating under a First Past the Post electoral system will tend towards the extension strategy, whereas parties operating under a Proportional Representation electoral system will tend towards the reinforcement strategy (proposition 6). This resembles arguments offered by Downs that a multi-party system leads to parties cultivating niches of core voters.[111] This was also proposed by Duverger, who proposed that parties under PR would be more rigid than under a majoritarian system.[112]

Part of the potential problem with this proposition is that it can be contingent on all sorts of other variables. Indeed, the distribution of the vote, the number of parties and the presence of competitors could all conceivably contribute to constrain or enable certain

108. For a discussion of the mechanical effects of electoral systems, see A. Blais et al., "The Mechanical and Psychological Effects of Electoral Systems: a Quasi-Experimental Study," *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 12 (2011): 1599–1621; Duverger, *Political Parties*, 217.
109. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing," 378.
110. Ibid.
111. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 125-127.
112. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 205.

strategies. However, as already argued above, an argument can be made that the electoral system is a strong influence on many of these kinds of variables. Their interaction with the electoral system also strengthens the case for treating them like background variables without including them in the model with separate propositions. Using the case study method (see chapter 4), we can examine whether these background variables play a role alongside or in combination with the electoral system, generating evidence that can be used to refine proposition 6 if necessary.

3.5.5 The final strategy and recovery

A final theoretical and operational matter to consider is at what point the recovery process ends. There is one clear end state in which we can truly say the process has concluded: full recovery, the point at which the party has managed to make up for the losses of the shock election defeat. We can take some liberties where part of the shock was not strictly numerical – return to government, in most cases, can be seen as recovery, particularly when election results rather than coalition politics are a strong influence on it. Yet not all parties reach even this point, so the question arises: when do we stop looking at a recovery process?

Technically, the process never ends because if we look at figure 3.1, even when a party seems satisfied with its way of doing things and does not diagnose a crisis anymore (perhaps because there is none), there will be a re-evaluation at the next election. There has to be a point, however, especially for parties which continue in a state of crisis, when the strategy has achieved some definitive form. Otherwise, we would never be able to conclude anything about the pressures of internal characteristics and the institutional environment on parties trying to recover from heavy electoral defeat as we would not be able to assign any value to the dependent variable in a definite way. Theoretically at least, it is easy to conceptualise an end point: the recovery process ends from the party's perspective when its electoral performance is evaluated in such a way that the case for further reforms to the party is defeated by 'loyalists' to the new situation, and therefore is no longer judged to be a reason to act.

Theoretically easy though this is, there are practical concerns in operationalising the end of a recovery process. For one, we cannot assume that recovery strategies are "locked in" when they lead to gains at the polls. After all, gains may or may not be taken as sufficient evidence for the effectiveness of its current course depending on the situation the party is in. In terms of our model, once a new "whether'-stage' comes along, even small gains might under some circumstances (such as in the British Labour Party in 1987) be judged insufficient to resolve that no further action on the crisis is needed. For this reason, the "final strategy" will be defined pragmatically. In this dissertation, this time period will be restricted to two electoral cycles after the election. This allows for a new election in the middle of the period as a sort of evaluation point, which allows gauging whether the strategy changes as a result, without requiring impracticably large amounts of data. It will also be used to operationalise the sequence of the model in which institutional characteristics impact first and the constraints of the electoral system second.

3.6 Summary and conclusions

In summary: the strategy a party chooses consists of a mix of measures belonging to the extension and reinforcement strategies in the areas of tactics, programme and organisation. This mix can therefore contain both strategies at the same time, even within the same dimension. According to the theory outlined here, this mix emerges as part of a process that is here described as a two-step model. The six propositions formulated in the course of this chapter are enumerated in table 3.2. Preferences are formed in a path-dependent way through the inclinations of actors within the party, influenced by the historical institutional characteristics of the party in question. In particular, these preferences are influenced by variables which relate to the strength of a party's ties to its electoral base and to its ideology. The stronger these affective ties or practical reliance on the base or on ideology, the stronger the pressure will be towards a reinforcement strategy.

By all accounts, the constraints of the institutional environment in which a party operates and the dynamics of the party system would appear in our formulation of the theory to be stronger than internal factors. This is because the main goal of a party in an electoral crisis is to win back votes: the environment logically imposes substantial constraints on how this can or cannot be done. Although external considerations will probably have an immediate impact in reality at least for some of the actors in the process, the model considers this impact to occur after the preferences have been shaped by internal considerations because it seems likely that this impact increases over time. In this way, our model can be said to consist of multiple phases of recovery strategies in which each successive strategy would be impacted increasingly by the external environment.

Thinking of the impact of various factors in two steps, the first being internal factors and the second environmental constraints, helps give analytical clarity to what is more likely than not going to be a messy continuous progression from one strategy to the other as certain considerations increase in importance over time. It is, in other words, a simplification of a complex reality intended to aid theorising. By comparing what a party initially intends to change about itself to what, by the end, it actually has changed about itself, we can test whether the impact of certain factors is as hypothesised and, within-case, whether the size of the impact does indeed vary over time. In the next chapter, the operationalisation of the model shall be considered in order to allow a test of the six propositions.

Table 3.2: Summary of propositions

'Whether'-stage
1. The higher the proportion of votes or seats lost in the shock electoral defeat relative to the last election, the greater the pressure towards change will be, and therefore the higher the probabolity that a party will diagnose a crisis.
2. When a party has previously experienced a defeat which meets the threshold set for a crisis, this will strengthen the case for change and therefore increase the probability that a party will diagnose a crisis.
Internal factors
3. Parties which have higher levels of electoral base attachment are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy; those with lower levels the extension strategy.
4. Parties which have higher levels of ideological attachment are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy; those with lower levels the extension strategy.
5. Electoral base attachment impacts the organisational and tactical dimensions more than the programmatic dimension, while ideological attachment impacts the programmatic dimension more than the organisational and tactical dimensions, leading to the following concrete expectations: a) Parties with a higher electoral base attachment tend to favour organisational reforms shifting power towards the membership, whereas those with lower electoral base attachment tend to favour organisational reforms shifting power away from the membership. b) Parties with a higher electoral base attachment tend to favour their core constituency, whereas those with lower electoral base attachment tend to favour a broader constituency. c) Parties with a higher ideological attachment tend to highlight their traditional values, whereas parties with a lower ideological attachment tend to downplay their traditional values.
External factors
6. Parties under FPTP are more likely to pursue the extension strategy; parties under PR are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy.

4 Methodology and Case Selection

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has outlined a heuristic model that can be used to interpret and explain the choices made by a party in crisis and formulated a number of hypotheses to help test its validity as well as generate insights that can be used to refine the model and develop it into a full theoretical model. This chapter will start by justifying the choice of a research design based on the comparative and case study methods in section 4.2 below. This is followed in section 4.3 by the specification of this comparative research design, in particular the case selection. After this, section 4.4 discusses the archival method of data collection and discusses the sources to be used in each case. Section 4.5 gives an operationalisation of the various concepts introduced in chapter three as dependent and independent variables. Finally, section 4.6 brings it all together, outlining the way in which this method will be used to test the six propositions formulated in chapter three.

4.2 The Comparative and Case Study Methods

A qualitative research design best suits the subject matter of this dissertation. So far, both quantitative and qualitative designs have been used in studies on shock-induced party change. The first test of the Harmel and Janda model by Harmel *et al.* was a quantitative large-N study.[1] However, as Müller observed, it is not really a causal analysis since alternative expectations cannot be ruled out by the method and it cannot resolve conflicts between the possible factors empirically – if multiple explanatory factors are present, what caused the change?[2] These are problems that also pop up, as already observed in chapter three, in the tentative model that is being tested in this dissertation. Without looking in-depth at cases and taking into account the causal chains linking various factors to outcomes, there is a 'black box' over the case which prevents looking in to isolate precisely what causes certain categories of party change.

Following Müller's reasoning, it therefore seems logical to use a case study.[3] This method focuses on the detailed qualitative examination of a single case, seeking to understand the way in which various factors lead to various outcomes. It is a method often used in

1. R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 8; R. Harmel et al., "Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change: An Empirical Analysis," *West European Politics* 18, no. 1 (1995): 1–33.

2. W. C. Müller, "Inside the Black Box: A Confrontation of Party Executive Behaviour and Theories of Party Organizational Change," *Party Politics* 3, no. 3 (1997): 295.

3. Ibid.

historical institutionalist research involving path-dependency.[4] This is also a matter of necessity – since the theoretical concept of path-dependency involves the idea that the sequence of events in each case is of crucial importance, the cases need to be examined at a level of detail that allows the complex sequences of events leading to different outcomes in each case to be observed.

However, case studies such as Müller's also reveal a problem of the method: their analytical method focuses in part on what is particular about the case.[5] By cleverly selecting the cases such that they are least-likely or most-likely scenarios for the theory to apply, this can be partly mitigated in the sense that there is less of a problem with generalisation. However, as observed in chapter two, there is also the problem that the conception of change varies slightly in each case – what is explained in each study is different from the next. This is in part also due to the method, which by focusing on detailed examination of a single case is better equipped to explain the presence of an outcome than its absence (since for an outcome to be absent somewhere it must be present elsewhere). This is probably why Duncan could not go further than suggesting certain explanations for the perceived absence of programmatic change in his case study of the Dutch CDA.[6] Without evidence of what caused programmatic change to be present in another case, it is harder to explain what the CDA lacked to produce an outcome without it. More generally speaking, therefore, without evidence from other cases, in the same terms, it is hard to conclude what determines the presence or absence of certain changes.

Since the propositions formulated in chapter three frequently propose that certain factors increase the probability of one strategy rather than the other, it is necessary to use qualitative evidence from multiple cases using the comparative method. Ideally, the cases should be either as similar or dissimilar as possible in order to demonstrate the presence of a causal relationship across cases. Even if this is rarely possible in practice, the comparative method can thus do what is more difficult in a single-case study: apply the same logic across cases and provide evidence why the causal relationships proposed apply in some cases but not in others. Therefore, this dissertation will have to include a comparative research design.

The case study method and the comparative method are often considered to be similar to each other. Together, they constitute the most used qualitative research methods in political science. Lijphart noted that the two methods were and should be closely connected, and might even overlap in some applications.[7] Indeed, some case studies, even studying a single case, draw on the logic of comparison in the sense that they belong to a certain class of cases and the selection of the single case might have consequences for the class. George and Bennett went a step further, stating that the comparative method, or structured comparison, was a version of the case study method rather than the other

4. E.g. R. Berins Collier and D. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

5. Müller, "Inside the Black Box."

6. F. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats During 'Purple Hague', 1994-8," *Party Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 84.

7. A. Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," *American Political Science Review* 65, no. 3 (1971): 691.

way around, and was characterised by mimicking the experimental method.[8] Seen in this way, the two methods operate in a similar way by qualitative description of a case and drawing inferences from those observations in a structured way. These inferences are, in both methods, made useful by the design of the study, particularly in the selection of the cases, which is the most crucial part of the research design.

Both methods are well-suited for the purposes of this dissertation. This study is concerned withtesting a heuristic model in order to build a full theoretical model of shock-induced party change. Lijphart noted that generating hypotheses where a gap exists in the literature is one of the most useful aspects of case studies.[9] By examining empirical evidence, a case study can arrive at new or fine-tuned explanations of a previously unaddressed problem. Even though this study already has testable propositions, this reasoning does apply to the broader heuristic function of the model. By studying single cases in detail employing the conceptual and heuristic toolset provided by the model, we can generate data that can be used to refine the model and the propositions. Case studies can also be useful to validate a broad theoretical model such as the one formulated in chapter three. This is because studying this particular class of cases, involving an element of chronology and observable reasoning behind decision-making as they do, allow us to test whether the theoretical direction of the argument is at all plausible.

The comparative and case study methods complement eachother. A weakness of the single-case study is that unless selected as a deviant or crucial case, there is limited scope for generalisation. This is a problem combined with the more general propositions formulated in chapter three. Take for instance the proposition that parties with higher electoral base attachment are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy, while those with lower electoral base attachment are more likely to pursue the extension strategy. A single case study might be able to offer support for either of these sides of the proposition, but only a multiple-case design that shows that the reverse applies as well can fully validate this proposition. However, the sheer number of propositions means that the problem of "too few cases, too many variables" applies. The cases vary on multiple independent variables and might also be subject to many of their own idiosyncrasies. In such a context, the case study method is helpful: by conducting within-case analysis as well as between-case analysis, some of these idiosyncrasies of each case might be resolved and evidence produced prioritising between the various factors proposed to impact the choice of recovery strategy. The comparative method is indispensable for testing the propositions generated by the model, while the case study method is most useful in complementing this test with the data needed to refine the model further.

Thus we arrive at the final form of the research design with both a comparative and a single-case component. The comparative component of the research design consists of four cases. These cases should be selected in such a way that they vary on the two major independent variables of the model – electoral base attachment and electoral system. In this way, the four cases effectively yield four different comparisons as illustrated in table 4.1 below. These comparisons approximate the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD)

8. A. L. George and A. Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 151.

9. Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," 692.

by keeping either electoral base attachment or electoral system constant while the other varies, thus allowing tests of the most important propositions.

Ultimately, the setup of this design meant a choice had to be made between ideological attachment and electoral base attachment as a selector variable. Taking both into account in the case selection and research design would double the number of cases needed since it would then require two out of three independent variables to be held constant for the method to work optimally. This would also have increased the probability of an open cell where no case displays a particular configuration of independent variables, especially if it is taken into account that most FPTP systems have fewer parties and therefore a smaller population.

Electoral base attachment was preferred because it is closer to the basic logic of the model. The two strategies are conceptualised largely in terms of the voters they appeal to, and the causal mechanism is mediated by the way certain internal and external factors make parties relate to their core electorate in different ways. Since electoral base attachment essentially represents this importance of the core electorate to a party, it is more central to the model.

While the comparative part of the research design figures mainly as a theory-testing device for the most important propositions, the case study method will be used to validate the nuts and bolts of the model. It is better-suited to testing the proposition that various variables impact different parts of the recovery strategy, which apart from evidence across cases can be strengthened significantly by specific within-case evidence linking specific variables to specific parts of the recovery strategy. Such links are easier to discern at the level of the individual case. They are especially important because at this early stage of development, the model will likely require some degree of revision as a result of the comparative test. The insights generated by using the model more loosely as a heuristic device in the case study chapters will be very useful in the refinement that results. This is why combining the two methods is crucial at this stage of theory-building.

The single-case studies make use of the process-tracing method, with some qualifications. This method was designed to study the intervening steps between a known outcome and a possible cause correlated with it. It can also involve backwards reasoning down a causal chain to explain an outcome in a similar fashion to studies using the historical method.[10] It can be argued that cause and effect are known in this way: despite the theoretical possibility that nothing happens, it is fairly well-documented that an external shock leads to some kind of party change. In a sense, each individual case study represents tracing the causal chain of events from the cause of change, the shock, to the change itself, with multiple independent variables intervening to determine the kind of strategy we end up with.

4.3 Case selection

Table 4.1 displays the way the comparative part of the research design operates as a test of proposition 3 on electoral base attachment and proposition 6 on electoral systems.

10. D. Beach and R. B. Pedersen, *Process-tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines* (2013), 20.

Table 4.1: Test of the main propositions using four focused comparisons; expected recovery strategies

		Electoral system	
		Proportional Representation	*First Past the Post*
Electoral base attachment	*High*	Reinforcement	Reinforcement, then extension
	Low	Extension, then reinforcement	Extension

As can be seen, each of these two propositions is tested by two Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) comparisons. Electoral base attachment is studied by comparing the parties that differ in electoral base attachment in the same electoral system, and vice versa the electoral system is studied as an independent variable by comparing parties with similar electoral base attachment in different electoral systems. This produces the four-cell research design displayed in table 4.1. This design requires four cases: in two electoral systems, a low-attachment and a high-attachment party were selected. If the model is to be validated, then the configuration of the recovery strategy in the four cases should be as shown below. Because of the different times at which internal and external factors come into play, there is also an element of sequencing: where internal factors lead to a preference that is impacted by external constraints in such a way that it should change, the second electoral cycle should show a different strategy than the first. The methodological considerations underlying the research design shall be discussed first before moving on to the justification of the final selection.

Technically, it could be possible to select parties from similar systems in different countries. However, for the method to closely approximate the ideal MSSD condition of variance only existing on the variables under study, it is better to select the cases from one country for each electoral system. This is not just because electoral systems have subtle differences across countries, even if they are of the same type, but also because the political conditions differ considerably between countries in other ways. For example, while the United Kingdom might technically have the same basic electoral system as Canada, Canadian politics as a whole can be said to differ considerably from Britain's because Canada more often elects a parliament without a majority. The same argument applies to longitudinal variations in the same country, adding the consideration that the cases selected in each country should be as close to each other in time as possible. To use the example of Britain again, British politics was substantially different in the 1950s and 1960s, when both major parties were more moderate, than it would be in the 1970s and 1980s, which saw polarisation in politics.[11]

After two countries have been selected, two cases should be selected in each, one with a low electoral base attachment and one with a high electoral base attachment. Here the case selection runs into an operational question. The population of cases from which the

11. J. Black, *A History of the British Isles* (2003), 281-282.

cases are selected must be defined. This population consists of all cases in which a party has suffered an electoral shock. It follows that a criterion must be established by which a 'normal' electoral defeat can be distinguished from a shock. The most obvious way in which shocks can be distinguished is their magnitude. Here any limit will always be arbitrary. Balancing the necessary number of cases to select from in a number of Western countries with the necessity of having as high a threshold as possible, the rule of thumb employed in this study is that a shock is any electoral defeat in which a party loses at least a third of its votes or seats. Even then, there are other cases of electoral defeat which are generally understood to have been shocks. These shocks were, in some cases, added to the population for more qualitative reasons, such as that they involved a sizeable loss while in opposition or loss of government status for the first time.

The requirements placed upon the case selection by the comparative method have a potential drawback for the case study method. While the comparative method requires that the cases be as similar to each other as possible for the comparison to be controlled, the case study method thrives on diversity of the selected cases. After all, if the causal mechanisms can be shown to be present in a number of very different cases, this provides stronger evidence that they work in the same way across the entire population of parties in crisis. The choice was made to prioritise comparison in order to get a better test of the propositions. This does not mean, however, that the single cases cannot be selected within the comparative design in such a way that they present, for instance, typical or deviant cases. Where possible, if such a rationale for the case study method is feasible, it will be noted in the final case selection below.

4.3.1 Selecting two countries

As described in section 4.2 above, this research project operates through a combination of case studies and a total of four focused comparisons between parties within and between two countries. The practical considerations of case selection, then, start with the question of which countries should be used to select cases from. The countries selected were the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. This involved a number of considerations practically similar to those made when selecting two MSSD cases. The two countries should be comparable in most respects except where their electoral systems are concerned. To aid the comparison, furthermore, two countries should be selected that differ as much as possible on this variable. As the electoral systems were operationalised in terms of a continuum between the majoritarian FPTP system and an extreme proportional electoral system, the countries selected should be as close to these two poles as possible. As shall be considered in more detail discussing the cases below, both countries satisfy these requirements.

The British "Westminster" system of government can be considered the archetype of a majoritarian system. From 1945 onwards, there have been only three occasions, in February 1974, 2010 and 2017, on which the election produced a "hung" Parliament at Westminster, that is, when no party had an overall majority. The FPTP system in single-member constituencies where members are elected by a simple plurality of the votes is seen to advantage the two major parties - the centre-left Labour Party and the centre-

right Conservative Party - with a chance of a majority.[12] Minor parties have, for the most of British post-war history, only had a handful of seats, but have occasionally become important. Britain is therefore often called a two-party system. The psychological as much as the mechanical effects of the British electoral system make for a very majoritarian playing field, where only the two major parties are serious competitors for office.

Ideally, we should then select a proportional system that is as different as possible in these respects from the British system. The Netherlands seems to present a clear candidate. Since 1917, the Dutch electoral system has been one of the most radical Proportional Representation systems. Though there are multiple administrative districts for the purposes of lists of candidates, there is only a single national district for calculating the results of elections and allocating seats among parties. In addition, there is no threshold beyond the natural threshold required for a single seat in Parliament. This results in a system with a multitude of political parties represented in Parliament, and continuous coalition government. More importantly, as is the primary requirement for the case selected, it weighs every vote the same way. In such a context, the effect of the electoral system can be expected to be rather different from the British case. With such low barriers to winning seats and entry into the party system for newcomers, the system is more competitive between the multiple parties. This is particularly the case after pillarization broke down, as evidenced by a relatively high level of electoral volatility compared to other Western European countries like it.[13] This might result, as proposed in chapter three, in pressures towards cultivating the loyalty of one's core voters, and therefore a reinforcement strategy.

4.3.2 Selecting the parties

In chapter 3, electoral base attachment was conceptualised as the strength of attachment of a party's decision-making elite to its electoral base through formal rules as well as informal values and ties. Because parties do not usually approach voters as unique individuals but rather as members of groups, this attachment is also to the electoral base seen as a particular group. Often, this will take the form of a particular social class or religious group, especially if the party originated from a cleavage. The strongest form of electoral base attachment was stipulated to be a formal tie with an organisation perceived to be representing this group, such as a trade union or a church. Absent any formal ties, electoral base attachment could also be the result of overlapping personal loyalties within the party elite. Since these two forms of attachment are at once the clearest and often the strongest forms of electoral base attachment, they will be employed as a logic for case selection.

The criterion for case selection is therefore that two parties should be selected which have formal or personal ties to the base, and two which do not. To further strengthen

12. M. Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. from the French by B. North and R. North (London: Methuen, 1954 [1951]), 218; G. V. Golosov, "Party nationalization and the translation of votes into seats under single-member plurality electoral rules," *Party Politics* 24, no. 2 (2018): 126.

13. S. Mainwaring, C. Gervasoni, and A. España-Najera., "Extra- and within-system volatility," *Party Politics* 23, no. 6 (2017): 626.

Table 4.2: Years post-1945 in which British parties lost at least 33% of votes or seats

Parties	*Votes*	*Seats*
Liberal Party	1951	1951, 1970
Labour Party	1983	
Liberal Democrats	2015	2015
Democratic Unionist Party	1987, 2010	1997
Plaid Cymru	1964, 1979	1979
Ulster Unionist Party	2005	2001, 2005, 2017
National Liberal Party		1964, 1966
Scottish National Party	1979	1979, 2017
Communist Party of Great Britain	1951	1950
Conservative Party		1997
Nationalist Party (Ireland)	1950	
Alliance Party (Northern Ireland)		2015
United Kingdom Independence Party	2017	
Green Party of England and Wales	2017	
Social Democratic and Labour Party		2017

the case selection, we might select from parties lacking such ties those where informal norms and conventions inimical to privileging a certain base exist. In this way, we can counterpose parties which definitely have some form of ties to the base beyond informal rules with parties that definitely will have lower levels because their informal rules are inimical to electoral base attachment. This strengthens the comparison by making the difference between the two cases as large as possible.

In the United Kingdom, from a population consisting of all parties having suffered an electoral defeat in excess of one-third of the previous vote or seat count or added for qualitative reasons (see table 4.2[14]) , two parties were therefore selected: the Labour Party and the Liberal Party. The Labour Party is a typical example of a party with formal ties to its base. Having grown out of the trade union movement, the party has a constitution which reserves a certain formal influence or power for the unions.[15] It is the best high-attachment case available, given the unique nature of this arrangement among British parties. It is also a typical case of party recovery, since the rise of New Labour is among the most high-profile transformations in social democratic parties in Europe. When looking for a party which lacks such ties and exhibits low attachment by informal conventions or norms, there is likewise not as much choice. Since most other small parties are geographically based, they can be said to have some form of attachment, in this case to a geographical base. This leaves only the nationwide parties. Looking for a case that is temporally close to the case of the Labour Party, the Liberal Party was selected. Not

14. Data obtained from H. Döring and P. Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)," Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, `http://www.parlgov.org`.

15. A. Clark, *Political Parties in the UK* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 178; P. D. Webb, "The United Kingdom," in *Party Organizations: A Data Handbook*, ed. R. S. Katz and P. Mair (London: SAGE, 1992), 855-857.

Table 4.3: Years post-1945 in which Dutch parties lost at least 33% of votes or seats

Parties	*Votes*	*Seats*
Boerenpartij	1971, 1977	1971, 1977
Centrumdemocraten	1998	1998
Communistische Partij Nederland	1959, 1977, 1986	1959, 1977, 1986
Democraten 66	1972, 1982, 1998, 2002, 2006	1972, 1982, 1998, 2002, 2006
Democratische Socialisten '70	1977	1977, 1981
Gereformeerd Politiek Verbond	1977	1977
GroenLinks	2012	2012
Lijst Pim Fortuyn	2003	2003
Nieuwe Middenpartij	1972	1972
Pacifistisch Socialistische Partij	1971, 1977, 1986	1971, 1977, 1986
Partij van de Arbeid	2002, 2017	2002, 2017
Partij voor de Vrijheid	2012	2012
Politieke Partij Radicalen	1977	1977, 1982
Reformatorische Politieke Federatie	1986	1986
Socialistische Partij	2010	2010
Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij		1992, 2002
Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	2002	2002

only does the Liberal Party lack formal and personal ties to organisations representing their core voters, they can also be said not to have much in way of a core vote.[16]

Turning to the Dutch cases, for which the universe is enumerated in table 4.3,[17] there is one obstacle: none of these parties had the same formal arrangement Labour maintains to the organisations of its trade unionist base at the time of a crisis. It seems prudent to select a party of a similar size, type and position in the party system to Labour, but which exhibits electoral base attachment by personal ties rather than through formal rules. This is how we arrive at the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), our high-attachment Dutch case. The CDA has many personal ties between its leadership and the leadership of Christian-inspired organisations in civil society, from which it often recruits its candidates and leaders.[18] It is also, like the Labour Party, a major party. In addition, the CDA is a case that has defied the expectations of previous studies and could therefore be used as a deviant case study.[19] For a low-attachment case, Democrats '66 was selected. It is ideologically similar to the Liberal Party: advocating a centrist Liberalism very similar to the position the Liberals arrived at.[20] To avoid the problems a young party suffers which

16. J. Curtice, "Liberal Voters and the Alliance: Realignment or Protest?," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 105.

17. Data obtained from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."

18. K. Van Kersbergen, "De christendemocratische feniks en de moderne, niet-seculiere politiek," chap. 197-216 in *De Conjunctuur van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010*, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 203.

19. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'."

20. Even though the party itself refused to adopt any sort of ideological orientation, and multiple discussions on whether the party was "social liberal" ended without any adoption of such an ideological label, it did in the end define itself as a liberal party, and many members saw the party as the spiritual

Table 4.4: Summary of the case selection

	Labour Party, 1983-1992	**Christian Democratic Appeal, 1994-2002**	**Liberal Party, 1970-1974**	**Democrats '66, 1982-1989**
Year of crisis election	1983	1994	1970	1982
Country	United Kingdom	Netherlands	United Kingdom	Netherlands
Year of foundation	1900	1980	1859	1966
Ideology	Democratic socialism	Christian democracy	Liberalism	Officially none (social liberalism)
Pre-crisis vote share	36,9%	35,3%	8,5%	11%
Pre-crisis seats	269/635	54/150	12/630	17/150
Crisis vote share	27,6%	22,2%	7,5%	4,3%
Crisis seats	209/650	34/150	6/630	6/150
Electoral base attachment	Formal ties	Personal ties	No ties	No ties

are peculiar to its newness, which may hamper comparison, the 1982 crisis was preferred to the earlier one in 1971. Moreover, Democrats '66 has informal norms and conventions against prioritising the interests of any sort of core voter, preferring a programmatic appeal.[21]

Thus we arrive at the final case selection summarised alongside a number of key variables in table 4.4. The cases that have been selected form a strong basis for comparison. The cases are not just as comparable as possible given the total number of cases in each country, but also in terms of the voteshares polled before the crisis and their position in the party system.

4.4 Archival research: opportunities and limitations

Like many qualitative studies, this study has to rely on historical data. This is more restrictive on the cases than it seems. Historical records almost always have restrictions placed on them for a certain amount of years to protect the persons involved in the decision-making process, some of whom may be prominent political leaders. Therefore, the youngest available will have its crisis at most 20 years ago. This has certain implications that must be kept in mind. For one, the structure of party competition may have been

successor of a pre-war social liberal party, the *Vrije Democratische Bond*.

21. M. S. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie: de Geschiedenis van D66, 1966-2003* (Den Haag: SDU, 2003), 380.

different. Defeats on the scale of what we term a crisis occurred less often. Certain practices that are now very wide-spread, such as One Member One Vote (OMOV), were less wide-spread, and external democratisation was almost unheard of. This has to be kept in mind in judging the cases.

In order to observe the decision-making processes of a historical case of a party in crisis, using Qualitative Historical Analysis, there are a number of possible sources.[22] The most direct ones are primary sources, in this case the archival records. One could also find the necessary information in the secondary sources compiled by historians, but it has been observed by methodologists in the social sciences that it is too often forgotten that historians have had to select and interpret their data, and that their accounts by necessity give only a partial picture.[23] To make a judgment wholly tailored to the needs of the research question, therefore, there is a need to consider source material that is as complete as possible. This can be found in archival sources that are accessible.

Literature on archival research distinguishes between two sources of data: the running record and the episodic record.[24] The episodic record consists of often personal instances of data that are not compiled continuously, such as correspondence and diaries.[25] The term running record refers to the records made by organisations, often in a continuous run, of their decisions and meetings. Minutes and papers of official bodies are the part of the running record that will be most useful to this research project.

There is one significant advantage to the running record over methods like surveys and interviews: the data was not produced with research in mind. The people who compiled the running records of a political party did not do so bearing in mind that they were talking to a researcher who might in some distant future read their files.[26] Rather, they were concerned with preserving certain historical decisions and meetings for the record of their particular party. This means that researchers do not have to deal with questions normally raised in obtrusive research, such as whether the observations are biased by the fact that actors know they are being scrutinised by researchers.[27]

In this way, the archival records of political parties can provide us with the data needed to understand the causal mechanisms at work in the model. Archival records preserve not just the decisions made, but also what decisions were originally proposed but changed or ultimately decided against. Papers included in runs of files from party institutions often also include some of the evidence on which decisions were based. The evaluation reports (also occasionally called "post-mortems") often produced after electoral defeat are a very important example of this type of source, because they reveal what a party knows as well as how they propose to deal with it. Most crucially, however, minutes often set out at

22. See C. G. Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 3, no. 4 (2002): 351–372.

23. Ibid., 364.

24. E. J. Webb et al., *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1972), 53.

25. Ibid., 88.

26. Ibid., 53.

27. Of course, the running record is preserved so that there is an internal record, and this means there is some possibility of scrutiny by future decision-makers. The key phrase here, therefore, is "by researchers": scientific research entails a different mode of perusing the archives that is unlikely to have been on the mind of decision-makers at the time these records were made. It is, therefore, a different kind of scrutiny.

least the bare bones of the reasoning leading to a certain decision, and this is primarily how the model works: via the perceptions of party decision-makers.

This mitigates what is seen as the most important weakness of archival research: the risk of a selection bias creeping in.[28] Of course, selection bias is still a problem. Because the running record is preserved with an eye to keeping internal records of decision-making, there is the risk that certain parts which are less comfortable or not deemed as important are not recorded.[29] In addition, the justification of decision-making on the record might have its own social desirability reflex, that is, it might not tell the full story. However, the fact that the record is coloured by the perceptions of party decision-makers is exactly what we are looking for: it does not matter so much whether a party's base is actually important if those who make the decisions at least believe it is important, for example. Similarly, the perceived effects of an electoral system are more important to the way the choices parties make are modelled than its actual effects. In this way, the justification given in the running record for certain decisions, especially where the record was intended to stay private and not released to rank-and-file members, can be counted on to reveal something close to the reasoning that forms the causal mechanism hypothesised in the model.

Another way of mitigating the risk of bias creeping into archival observations is triangulation with different data sources.[30] Triangulation is undoubtedly strongest when the archival record is cross-referenced with primary data from non-archival sources. Interviews with key figures seem a clear candidate.[31] Matters that are not on the record for any reason, hidden meanings and suchlike can be checked with interview respondents who were in important positions at the time. There is, however, a drawback: having to find respondents would put a maximum on the number of years one can go back to find cases, since any decision-maker in his or her 40s during a crisis would be at a very advanced age now. For all these reasons, the only case where interviews will be used in this dissertation shall be the CDA, the most recent case, and only to fill in temporal gaps in the archival data. These interviews were conducted within the context of a previous study of party recovery involving this case.

This study shall mostly rely, therefore, on the running records of political parties as preserved in their party archives. Where a personal archive is used, the focus will still be on documents that are part of a running record or relate to a running record, such as memos prepared for meetings. Correspondence from personal archives is occasionally used where it concerns important actors, but the use made of these sources is limited. Where diaries and memoirs were available, they were referenced but only used where they add information to the running record, such as the personal perspective of certain actors.

In the absence of interviews, triangulation can only be between different archival records and contemporary media accounts, as well as with the secondary source material. This is

28. Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," 355; Webb et al., *Unobtrusive Measures*, 54.

29. Webb et al., *Unobtrusive Measures*, 55.

30. Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," 357.

31. O. Tansey, "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: a Case for Non-Probability Sampling," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40, no. 4 (2007): 765–772.

not necessarily a problem, since the historical method often relies on triangulation between multiple primary sources as well.[32] Some parties have enjoyed extensive treatment of their histories by historians or in other case studies by political scientists and these multiple sources can be used for the purposes of triangulation, taking into account the caveats above about the fact that each history is in itself an interpretation that makes its own selection from the sources. If the interpretation of the running record diverges wildly from the judgment of previous scholars of the party in question, it might reveal a bias in either source which we were unaware of and which should be approached carefully. In this way, secondary sources can be used for a limited triangulation. However, the primary focus is on the archival sources, with the secondary sources being used to fill in historical gaps and supplement missing facts. The available sources will be discussed for each case selected in more detail.

As argued in chapter three, the choice has been made to fix the span of the data for each case so that it starts at the crisis election and ends two elections after that, incorporating two electoral cycles. In that time, the contours of a more or less final strategy will likely become clear and there is enough scope to examine the impact of the party's performance on its eventual choice of strategy. It also results in time periods of at most ten years, which is a practicable timespan to do the labour-intensive work that is archival research.

4.4.1 Sources per case

Although the type of sources used for each case is similar and poses broadly similar challenges, no running record is exactly the same as the next one. This is especially the case when used in a qualitative manner rather than, as implicitly recommended by Webb *et al.*, by quantitative measures such as indices constructed from the data.[33] The depth and breadth of the data differs between the cases and sometimes even within the cases, depending on the way in which it records certain events or decisions, ranging from a simple list of conclusions reached or decisions made to verbatim reports. The types of documents included in each archive also vary, as each party has a different structure and even comparable bodies have different remits, which affects the kind of documents they produce. Therefore, what follows is a brief overview of the data (see table 4.5) to be used per case and potential problems or biases.

4.4.1.1 The British Labour Party, 1983-1992

The archives of the British Labour Party are extensive and well-preserved. The full run of minutes and documents from all the national bodies of the party, particularly the National Executive Committee (NEC), is deposited at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre of the People's History Museum in Manchester and available for the period under study without restrictions[34]. This meant the case study was able to draw on papers from

32. Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," 357.

33. Webb et al., *Unobtrusive Measures*, 82-83.

34. People's History Museum. Labour History Archive and Study Centre, "Collection Catalogues & Descriptions," accessed December 12, 2017, `http://www.phm.org.uk/archive-study-centre/online-`

Table 4.5: Overview of primary sources

Labour Party, 1983-1992	**Liberal Party, 1970-1974**	**Christian Democratic Appeal, 1994-2002**	**Democrats 66, 1982-1989**
• Labour Party Archives: – National Executive Committee – Shadow Cabinet – Parliamentary Labour Party – Policy Review and other ad hoc committees – *Labour Weekly* • Kinnock Papers	• Liberal Party Archives: – National Executive Committee – Liberal Assembly – Liberal Party Council	• CDA Party Archives: – National committee – Party council • Documents available at CDA Central Office: – National congress papers – Party council papers – Personal archive of 2000-2001 national committee minutes • Interviews from a previous study	• D66 Party Archives: – National committee – National executive – Party council – National congress • Party magazine *Democraat*

all major actors, including the National Executive Committee (NEC), Shadow Cabinet and the Parliamentary Party, as well as papers produced by various committees instituted to work on certain aspects of the recovery strategy, chiefly the Policy Review. All in all, there is possibly too much material for the 1983-1992 period available to consult in the scope of this study, but the selection includes the party publications, the full runs of NEC and Parliamentary Party/Shadow Cabinet minutes for the entire period and documents of the Policy Review Group, Franchise Review Group and Trade Union Links Review Group, selected to focus in on certain parts of the recovery strategy.

This leaves one important actor in the Labour Party uncovered – the leader, Neil Kinnock and his team. Luckily, the papers of Neil Kinnock have been preserved and extensively documented at the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge.[35] These papers give an important perspective on the recovery strategy that, when triangulated using the official party papers, should give useful information. More importantly, it gives an insight into the motivations driving one of the central figures of the recovery project. There is the risk of bias, but this has been mitigated by looking mostly at copies of the running record contained in Kinnock's papers, which allows an eye on the context.

4.4.1.2 The British Liberal Party, 1970-1974

The Liberal Party archives are a greater challenge. Perhaps unsurprising given the smaller size of the party organisation, the archives as preserved at the British Library of Political and Economic Science are at times uneven, with some bodies missing in the run of the papers.[36] The papers of the Standing Committee, which dealt with policy, were missing for the 1970-1974 period, for example, leaving only a few papers sent to other bodies. The main bodies, however, all had their minutes and resolutions preserved, including the NEC, the Party Council and the Liberal Assembly. This should give enough information for the analysis.

It should be noted, in addition, that the archives of the Liberal Parliamentary Party do not seem to be available. An extensive overview of sources on party organisations maintained by the Political Parties and Parliamentary Archives Group UK at the Bodleian Library in Oxford[37] makes no mention of the location of any such files. Attempts to supplement this gap with personal archives from Liberal MPs at the time were also unsuccessful, given that they did not have the years in question or only contained correspondence and constituency papers.

4.4.1.3 The Dutch Christian Democratic Appeal, 1994-2002

The Christian Democratic Appeal is the most recent case. The documents, while archived at the National Archives in the Hague, are not yet publicly available and have not yet

catalogue/.

35. University of Cambridge, "The papers of Neil Kinnock," accessed December 12, 2017, https://janus.lib.cam.ac.uk/db/node.xsp?id=EAD%2FGBR%2F0014%2FKNNK.

36. LSE Library, Catalogue record for the Liberal Party, accessed December 12, 2017, https://archives.lse.ac.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=LIBERAL+PARTY&pos=1.

37. Political Parties and Parliamentary Archives Group, UK, "Guide to Political Records," 2010, accessed December 12, 2017, http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/pppag/pppag-records.htm.

been fully catalogued.[38] The project was therefore dependent on the permission of the national executive of the CDA to consult the requisite files. Permission was given to consult the bulk of the material, the national committee and party council files, and to make use of resources freely available at the party's central office, which included all the council and congress files and a number of party publications. Permission to consult the files of the national executive (see chapter 5) was denied. Even with this restriction, the data was ample and provided the necessary information, with little clarification needed.

Among the archival sources, a prominent source of information is the 1994 evaluation report of the Gardeniers Commission.[39] Chaired by former Minister Til Gardeniers-Berendsen, this report contains an exceptionally clear picture of the party's strengths and weaknesses that resonated within the party and was taken up as the guiding thread throughout the recovery process. Because of this, the report can and will be used to measure the independent variables – illustrating how the CDA perceived its own position and what it knew about external challenges – as well as providing a point of reference for the analysis of the strategy itself.

There was a major hurdle to be overcome during the archival research: the national committee data was only available up to 2000 because it had only been catalogued up to that year. To resolve this issue, requests were sent out to the members of the national committee during those final two years to make minutes and files they had on the period available. This resulted in the donation by an unnamed member of the national executive of national committee files up to 2001 to central office, where they were made available for consultation. While it concerns a personal archive, the collection only consisted of copies of the running record. Although the data was not as extensive as the official archival material, it was enough for the purposes of the analysis.

The data was also supplemented by a number of semi-structured interviews conducted in the context of a master thesis on a related subject, in which the same CDA crisis figures as a case. This was mainly done to fill in the gap in the data that exists for the year 2002. These interviews give insights into the thinking of several high-profile figures from the crisis years, including both Party Chairmen during that period, Hans Helgers and Marnix van Rij. All quotes from these sources are used with the permission of the respondents. Additionally, they are only used where the data was not also in the written sources.

4.4.1.4 The Dutch Democrats '66, 1982-1989

The archives of D66 are deposited at the Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties at Groningen University, and are publicly available with prior permission from the party's headquarters.[40] They contain the full run of all documents related to the party's national congress, advisory council, national committee and national executive during the 1982-

38. The archivist provided a provisional catalogue, which is used as the basis for citing from the archives.

39. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie" (1994), inventory nr. 1678, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

40. Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, "Democraten 66 (D66) archieven," accessed December 12, 2017, `http://dnpp.nl/dnpp/node/834`.

1989 period.[41] These files were used, in addition to the party magazine *Democraat*, which, because of the party's unusually democratic internal structure, contains most of the papers for the national congress and also reports on the decisions made by party bodies, although this is becoming progressively less the case as the crisis continued. Van der Land's party history *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie* is also used extensively as a secondary source to establish the historical background of the party.[42]

4.4.2 Comparability of the data

A key question to be answered in regard to the sources outlined above is whether the data are comparable. That is, whether sources which are as similar as possible are used. Insofar as data can really be comparable where the record is produced with bodies with different competences, the main bulk of the data is indeed comparable since it consists of sources from similar bodies in the party organisation. Each contains the full run (or close to it) of at least the minutes of those bodies. These bodies are the national committee, the party council (where applicable) and the national congress of each party. They can be regarded as central to the party organisation, receiving reports from most other bodies. To get a picture of what a party has done, and the most rudimentary reasons why, the research project can rely on these comparable records.

Does the addition of certain sources, such as those of the Parliamentary Labour Party, Policy Review and Leader's Office and the CDA interviews, hamper the comparability of the data? In essence, this is only an issue where there is a comparable body that is known to have been active during the crisis, but to which for whatever reason we have no access. Most of the problem can be mitigated by using references to these bodies in other parts of the party organisation's records. For example, the leadership of a parliamentary party is represented in most executives and usually makes a statement from which the positions of the parliamentary party can be inferred. Likewise, most committees set up during a crisis report to the national committee of these parties, and will update them on their progress and the decisions they propose.

While the absence of, say, Policy Review records for the CDA or Parliamentary Party records for the Liberal Party prevent the analysis from going into the maximum possible amount of detail examining key actors in the recovery process, and may lead to their interests being underrepresented in any candidate explanation, they do not necessarily compromise the comparability of the data as such. Care should be taken, however, when using additional sources, to remain aware of any potential bias introduced by the presence or absence of such material.

41. An inventory is not yet available online. The catalogue used was a provisional one in which the boxes were ordered chronologically.

42. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*.

4.5 Operationalisation of key variables

4.5.1 The reinforcement and extension strategies

The choice between the reinforcement and extension strategies, on the whole and (in the case of propositions 5a through 5c) on each of the separate tactical, organisational and programmatic dimensions, acts as the dependent variable. In chapter three, these two strategies were conceptualised in terms of the strategic question where the votes to replace the voters who deserted the party should come from: from core voters (the reinforcement strategy) or by extending the base of the party durably with the votes of non-core voters (the extension strategy).

The greatest challenge in operationalising the reinforcement and extension strategies and their component dimensions is the relative paucity of qualitative operationalisation of the various dimensions of party change. Previous case studies of party change are rarely explicit about their operationalisation, often because they seek to explain a particular instance of change rather than map out the broader picture.[43] Even where this is not the case, a full operationalisation is rarely offered.[44]

Like most of these studies, this study uses the actions taken by parties in the process of recovery as evidence of their approach. In general, these actions will be measured with reference to the minutes of the national committee, party council and/or national congress of parties. These bodies, even if they do not take the decisions themselves, often receive reports from the actors that do. Their proceedings therefore should provide a reasonably accurate total picture of what a party did. We can then proceed to look at the specific dimensions and classifying specific actions into the reinforcement or extension strategies. The general logic by which this is done is as follows: since the recovery strategy differs from an electoral strategy by occurring at a moment of heightened contingency, we are looking first towards more long-term and radical measures. Where these are lacking, the constantly changing elements of normal electoral strategy like manifestos and campaign plans can also be used. In any case, we should cross-reference between the former and the latter to see if the changes made are also reflected in the usual documents.

Before jumping into the specific dimensions, a few general issues should be considered. The first is that the choice between the two strategies is conceptualised as a continuum: parties can and often will pursue elements of both. This introduces the question of weighting the various measures on each dimension and each dimension as part of the overall strategy. Determining a precise rank-ordering of dimensions and of individual measures will always be hard. After all, even if the amount of possibilities is constrained by the conceptualisation into a number of dimensions, there is still an almost boundless

43. J. Burchell, "Evolving or conforming? Assessing organisational reform within European green parties," *West European Politics* 24, no. 3 (2001): 113–134; W. C. Müller, "Inside the Black Box: A Confrontation of Party Executive Behaviour and Theories of Party Organizational Change," *Party Politics* 3, no. 3 (1997): 293–313; L. Bille, "Leadership Change and Party Change: The Case of the Danish Social Democratic Party, 1960-95," *Party Politics* 3, no. 3 (1997): 379–390; F. Løvlie, "Explaining Hamas's Changing Electoral Strategy, 1996-2006," *Government and Opposition* 48, no. 4 (2013): 570–593; E. Bélanger and J.-F. Godbout, "Why Do Parties Merge? The Case of the Conservative Party of Canada," *Parliamentary Affairs* 63, no. 1 (2010): 41–65.

44. Such as in Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'."

set of possible actions under each of them.

To make sense of that complexity, this study first imposes a number of criteria by which some actions can be judged to be more far-reaching than others. These are the direct result of the conception of the two strategies as superlatives of "normal" electoral strategy where fundamental changes to the party are possible as a part of it. These changes can be deeper and more long-term than adaptations to "normal" strategy, changing things that in normal circumstances would be more or less immutable. For example, where "normal" electoral strategy often involves a change of a single policy in an election manifesto, a party in crisis might also change its underlying ideological documents or review its entire raft of policies. This would be a further-reaching change, since such documents are normally off-limits, and should therefore be assigned a heavier weight when determining the party's strategy on the programmatic dimension. Long-term projects that make use of the fact that a recovery strategy, in contrast to "normal" electoral strategy, does not just take place during one election campaign but over the course of an entire electoral should also be assigned a heavier weight. For example, while a "normal" electoral strategy might adapt the target groups in the campaign plan, a recovery strategy could also contain long-term measures such as setting up a new body to appeal to a certain group.

Having determined the strategy on each dimension, we can then proceed to determine the overall strategy. In general, the choice has been made to accord equal weight to each dimension. This is, of course, a significantly simplified view of the recovery strategy, but nevertheless a necessary one. Most importantly, the complexity of the concept of a recovery strategy makes it hard to establish which dimensions should be weighted more strongly than others. Various parties might, from the viewpoint of their histories and characteristics or from circumstances, consider different parts of the strategy to be more important. Since the rationale of weighting the strategies should be uniform for the sake of rigour, this is hard to model at this point in time. The choice made to use equal weights therefore also serves the express function of being a starting point for inquiry - like many aspects of the model, it is an admittedly simple version that can and probably will be refined and made more complex as the model is being refined.

4.5.1.1 Measuring organisational change

The operationalisation of the organisational dimension of the strategy is summarised in table 4.6. Organisational change will usually be reflected in some way in (amendments to) the party's constitution or statutes. However, the minutes and papers of party bodies also offer a deeper perspective. They include not just the changes that did happen, but also those that were attempted or tested. Large reports on the party organisation, in particular, are useful in this regard, insofar as they touch upon the issue of democratisation or the power of the membership. With Cross and Katz, we take a broader understanding of democratisation, asking a number of questions including who is to be empowered in democratic decision-making and in what fields.[45] This can be in the field of policy-making, candidate selection or leadership elections.

45. W. P. Cross and R. S. Katz, "The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy," in *The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy*, ed. W. P. Cross and R. S. Katz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6-10.

Table 4.6: Organisational components of the reinforcement and extension strategies

Category	Carrier	Reinforcement	Extension	Sources
Actual rules changes	Rules amendments	Empowering party members	Empowering elites or registered non-member supporters	Party constitutions, reports and terms of reference
Intended rules changes	Pilots	Empowering party members	Empowering elites or registered non-member supporters	Reports and terms of reference
	Planned changes	Empowering party members	Empowering elites or registered non-member supporters	Reports and terms of reference

The distinction between the reinforcement and extension variants of organisational change is that the former is about empowering those 'inside' the party: the members. This is usually done through a process of internal democratisation. Democratisation can touch a number of fields of party activity, including leadership and candidate selection and policy formulation.[46] Studies of selection have measured the breadth of the group involved in selecting party leaders (the selectorate), running from the whole electorate (inclusive) to a single individual (exclusive).[47] Extrapolated to other fields of intra-party decision-making, this inclusiveness measure can be used to operationalise organisational change: if the selectorate is broadened to include more members or to include members more directly, it is evidence of internal democratisation and therefore of a shift in power towards the membership. If the opposite is true, and powers are being concentrated in the hands of the party leadership, power is instead shifting away from the membership. If the selectorate is broadened beyond members, this is evidence of a shift in power away from the membership as well: after all, such reforms detract from the exclusiveness of membership by vesting powers previously vested in members or leaders of the party in a wider population.

4.5.1.2 Measuring programmatic change

The first documents to look at in measuring programmatic change will be those which represent big efforts to reshape a party's programme. These efforts range in extent from

46. Cross and Katz, "The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy," 9.

47. G. Rahat and R. Y. Hazan, "Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical Framework," *Party Politics* 7, no. 3 (2001): 301; Ofer Kenig, "Classifying Party Leaders' Selection Methods in Parliamentary Democracies," *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 19, no. 4 (2009): 243, doi:10.1080/17457280903275261.

Table 4.7: Programmatic components of the reinforcement and extension strategies

Category	**Carrier**	**Reinforcement**	**Extension**	**Sources**
Ideology	Review of ideology	Reaffirm ideology	Reinterpret ideology	Reports and terms of reference
Programme	Comprehensive review	Highlight traditional values	Downplay traditional values	Reports and terms of reference
	Review of individual issues	Highlight traditional policy positions	Downplay or abandon traditional policy positions	Reports, terms of reference and manifestos

more fundamental to less fundamental. An overview of this range of measures can be found in table 4.7. At the furthest extent, a party might revise its ideological underpinnings and publish new descriptions of its ideological foundations. Going a bit less far, it might change the way in which it translates these foundations into concrete policy with either a comprehensive or a piecemeal overhaul of policies. We are therefore looking for reports on the party's ideological and policy programme, particularly those of such ideological and policy reviews. To judge whether such changes are highlighting or downplaying a party's values, terms of reference and reports of the bodies appointed to conduct the review should be considered.

A first operational issue associated with this, then, is how to determine what these values are. The secondary literature often already offers an interpretation. Combined with information on topics the party has generally considered of symbolic importance and any available ideological documents of the party, the values of a party can be established. In addition, what a party elite *thinks* its traditional values are, as evidenced by the way programmatic decisions are argued in the minutes of its decision-making bodies, is also of key importance.

Suppose, for example, that a party's traditional values were against nuclear weaponry. We could know this because there is a general scholarly consensus on it, because a declaration of founding principles asserted it, or simply because the documents show a generally expressed consensus that it is fundamental to the party. Any programmatic change qualifying the policy could then be considered to play down this element of the party's values, and a major policy document boldly reasserting it to highlight it. Depending on how deeply the conviction were held, this would be at least a medium-extent programmatic change.

As a final check, it is also important to consult the traditional measure of programmatic change and look at manifestoes. Manifestos change every election and therefore we cannot be sure whether a change in the manifesto would not also have been made outside a crisis situation. However, it could be relevant to see whether the priorities of reviews also occur in the manifesto a party presents at an election, and whether the drafters of the manifesto took the work of such reviews as major input.

As regards the use of manifesto data, a qualitative approach to each manifesto informed by available secondary sources has been preferred over the use of datasets such as the Chapel Hill Expert Survey[48] or the Comparative Manifesto Project[49]. The former is only available since 1984, which excludes some of our cases. More importantly, however, the operationalisation of the programmatic dimension requires a certain level of detail. Shifts in a party's traditional values can be evidenced by very specific issue areas such as nuclear disarmament in the case of the Labour Party or direct democratisation in the case of D66.

While the Comparative Manifesto Project has recently added sub-categories which could do this, these are as of yet unavailable in the dataset for the required period of time.[50] Without such sub-categories, the data is not fine-grained enough to use it as a reliable indicator in very specific issue areas. In addition, the data is measured relative to the entirety of the source document. While this remedies effects the length of the document would have on absolute score, it introduces noise in the measurements. In particular, a decline in the score for a certain issue might mean one of two things: the issue is less important or others have, potentially independently, increased in importance. Under such circumstances, qualitative study of the text of documents themselves seems the preferable option.

4.5.1.3 Measuring tactical change

Within the archival records described above, we are looking for more fundamental or long-term initiatives for tactical change. These include two general categories of measures: targeting measures, i.e. long-term measures to reach out to a particular group of voters; and image measures, that is changes to party symbols and changes to parliamentary and governmental tactics to influence how voters perceive the party in general.[51] These tactical measures are outlined in table 4.8. In addition, the party's campaign plan for any new election will be examined if available, cross-referencing to see if the long-term plans of the party also find expression in its concrete campaign plan. Where specific measures of this type are absent, we can go on the campaign alone,[52] but since campaign plans always change according to circumstances even in normal electoral strategy, we can assume that these measures are always of a lesser extent.

Targeting measures are the most obviously recognisable in the papers of party decision-making bodies. They include every measure consciously designed to increase the party's attractiveness to a particular group. Depending on whether the party perceives these groups to be part of its electoral base already or not, the measure can be classified as a reinforcement or extension strategy. Evidence for this decision can be found in campaign evaluations and in the discourse used to justify the measures. In addition, since electoral

48. M. Steenbergen and G. Marks, "Evaluating Expert Judgments," *European Journal of Political Research* 46, no. 3 (2007): 347–366; L. Ray, "Measuring party orientations toward European integration: Results from an expert survey," *European Journal of Political Research* 36, no. 2 (1999): 283–306.

49. A. Volkens et al., *The Manifesto Data Collection: Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR)* (Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum für Sozialforschung (WZB), 2018).

50. Ibid.

51. As in Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 77-78.

52. As in R. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing: how do parties target voters in election campaigns?," *Electoral Studies* 21, no. 3 (2002): 367–382.

Table 4.8: Tactical components of the reinforcement and extension strategies

Category	Carrier	Reinforcement	Extension	Sources
Targeting	Long-term targeting measures	Group within electoral base	Group outside electoral base	Campaign plans, executive documents
Image	Party symbols	Reinforce traditional symbolism	Downplay traditional symbolism	Executive documents, symbols
	Candidates	More representative of electoral base	More diverse candidates	Candidate lists, executive documents
	Coalitional and parliamentary strategy	More rigid strategy; lesser willingness to make concessions	More flexible strategy; greater willingness to make concessions	Executive documents

base attachment also requires some idea of who the party perceives to be its electoral base, this information can also be involved in judging whether a targeting measure represents an attempt to broaden or narrow the base.

Image measures are more tricky since they do not always directly appeal to specific groups. It includes changes to symbols such as the party logo, attempts to affect the image projected by its candidates and changes in the way a party conducts itself in office. Such an image can be more inclusive, geared towards making a party more attractive to the public in general, or exclusive, in which case the aim is to emphasise its symbolic ties to its electoral base. To get at attempts to shift the party image, this study examines logos and house styles, changes to affect the personal composition of candidate lists and documents and reports on the party's strategy in parliament. Not every change is necessarily linked to one of the strategies: a logo that has simply been updated to look more relevant and modern need not fall under either of them, for example. As with targeting measures, strategic intent and reasoning is key. The intent to change a party's image to be more broadly appealing or conversely more narrowly appealing determines which strategy it falls in.

4.5.2 Electoral base attachment

The main mediating variable in the model constructed in the previous chapter is electoral base attachment: the strength of attachment of a party's decision-making elite to (parts of) its electoral base through formal rules as well as informal values and ties. Detailing this conceptualisation further, a roughly ordinal scale was constructed employing the distinction used in institutionalist literature between formal rules and informal norms and conventions.[53] Formal rules giving influence to organised representatives of (parts

53. E.g. W. R. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas and Interests* (London: SAGE, 2008), 51.

Table 4.9: Operationalisation of electoral base attachment

Level of electoral base attachment	**Carrier**	**Concrete examples**	**Location**
Highest	Codified rules giving power to base representatives	Trade union members having reserved seats on party bodies.	Party constitution
↑	Codified rules expressing relationship with base	Statement that the party represents the working class	Party constitution
↕	Personal ties with base	Several party members have held leadership in unions	Personal data and secondary sources
↕	Informal norms that privilege base	Sentiment that defence of working-class interests is important	Minutes
↓	Informal norms against privileging base	Sentiment that party should not be an interest party.	Minutes
Lowest	Codified rules expressing general focus	Statement that the party opposes sectional appeals.	Party constitution

of) a party's electoral base constitute the strongest form of electoral base attachment. Overlapping personal loyalties among the party elites and informal norms and conventions are ranked below this. The weakest electoral base attachment is evidenced where formal rules or informal norms and conventions stipulate that a party should not privilege its core supporters.

The operationalization of electoral base attachment as shown in table 4.9 thus hinges on measurement of both formal rules and informal ties, norms and conventions. Institutional analysis usually identifies certain carriers containing these institutionalised attitudes.[54] By identifying these carriers or concluding that they are at work, we can infer the presence of a certain institutionalised attitude to the base. Measuring electoral base attachment, therefore, should start by examining the evidence for the presence of these carriers.

Although the logic is the same (look for the carriers), this works out different for formal and informal types of electoral base attachment. According to Scott, the carriers of formal, regulative institutions are rules, laws, governance systems and power systems. Their chief characteristic is their codification.[55] It is easy to identify these carriers in a political party: they consist in their written rules and in the power relationships among actors

54. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations*, 79.
55. Ibid.

within the party that they constitute. Identifying formal electoral base attachment, then, is a matter of consulting the party's written rules. If these rules give power or influence to representatives of an organised base group, then that is evidence of strong electoral base attachment. Where they are absent, a party's constitution, statutes or ideological documents might also contain references to the group a party wishes to represent. These are more symbolic, since they do not imply power relationships, but they still constitute electoral base attachment.

Within more informal types of institutions, we can distinguish between normative and cultural-cognitive types.[56] The carriers of these are more intangible, such as values, expectations, informal regimes, systems of authority, roles and identities. They are more difficult to recognise given that they cannot be directly observed. Instead, they must be inferred from evidence on the loyalties, behaviour and beliefs of party elites. Where loyalties are concerned, an important indicator is the occurrence of interlocking directorates: double roles played by members of the party's decision-making bodies.[57] We make one modification to the way Lijphart operationalised interlocking directorates.[58] In the Dutch context he describes, counting only simultaneous memberships of various elites in the same pillar made sense. They are still the strongest instances. However, non-simultaneous memberships can be equally telling, even if they represent a weaker form. An elite member who is socialised in an environment embodying a particular social interest will likely carry something of that affiliation over to the allied party.[59] Parties like the Dutch CDA have been noted to have a high degree of overlap in their leadership with (former) leadership of civil society organisations connected to their Christian base.[60] Such members will undoubtedly have some loyalty to these organisations and the groups they represent, and therefore increase electoral base attachment.

Even less tangible are the roles played by values and expectations, and informal norms and conventions in general. The presence of such institutionalised norms can therefore only be established by inferring it from rhetoric or argumentation in internal documents. Statements that express belief in the party's links to society or a certain subset of society, insist that the interests of a certain group are crucial or fundamental or that connect the identity of the party to a certain group all provide evidence of the presence of informal electoral base attachment. Of course, the more generally these opinions seem to be held and the more they are seen to sway opinion in the party, and the more often they recur, the more certain we can be that electoral base attachment by informal ties is at play.

Especially where informal norms are concerned, it can be hard to know where to start. To remedy this, two additional sources can be employed. First of all, electoral base attachment was conceptualised as having formed over the course of a party's history, the historical development of the party can serve as evidence. The roots of a party,

56. Ibid.

57. A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 59.

58. Ibid., 61.

59. See also R. A. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 2, no. 4 (1996): 266.

60. Van Kersbergen, "De christendemocratische feniks en de moderne, niet-seculiere politiek," 203.

in particular, have been held quite widely to relate to its character.[61] If a party was founded as a mass party of the working class, it makes sense to look particularly for signs of this heritage. Conversely, a party built upon the idea of some general interest might be expected to display norms against privileging sectional interests. Similarly, the secondary literature can be used to provide information on the general level of electoral base attachment to be expected.

4.5.3 Ideological attachment

In chapter three, ideology has been conceptualised as "the characterisation of a belief system that goes to the heart of a party's identity".[62] Attachment to an ideology, therefore, is characterised by the loyalty of a party and its elites to this characterised belief system and by the degree to which their actions and decisions are guided by the party's ideology. It has further been conceptualised as a developed institutional characteristic of a party. Operationalisation of ideological attachment, therefore, could follow the same general schema as the one used for electoral base attachment. However, since most parties have statements of their core beliefs in some sort of formal codified document, the mere presence of formal rules and statements become less useful to distinguish between parties. Since all parties have them, we must distinguish in some other way to what extent the parties are attached to the ideologies expressed in them. As such, the operationalisation of ideological attachment must lean far more on informal norms. In other words, we must determine to what extent a party lets itself be guided by its ideology.

In particular, this concerns the attitudes of decision-makers. The concrete evidence for this is found in expressions of the strength of the party's ideology and refusal to change positions regarded as ideologically significant for the sake of electoral expediency, as well as in the use of ideological concepts and vocabulary to frame decisions. Such expressions might be found in the minutes, consultation documents or in party newspapers. In addition, the judgments of other scholars in secondary literature will also be used to judge the ideological attachment of the parties under study. In this way, parties can be classified as more or less attached to their ideology.

In primary sources, ideological attachment can be recognised in much the same way as we recognised electoral base attachment through informal norms (see 4.5.2 above). As an additional challenge, however, we are looking for the use of ideological language and argumentation. It is unlikely that we can ascribe the same meaning to a member of a party arguing that "ideology X is important" as to a member arguing that "base group Y is important", since the ideology of a party is quite multi-interpretable. Rather, we should look for certain "signal words" in the documents which signify ideological commitments. The more frequently these occur and the more they seem to sway opinion, the more ideologically attached a party is. These words differ from party to party. They can be more generic, such as the name describing the ideology (e.g. "democratic socialism" for a

61. S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, eds., *Party Systems and voter alignments: cross-national perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 5-6; Duverger, *Political Parties*, xvii.

62. P. Mair and C. Mudde, "The Party Family and its Study," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): 220.

socialist party), or concepts and agendas more specific to a certain party (e.g. "community politics" for the British Liberal Party and "democratic renewal" for the Dutch D66).

Much like we can look towards history and secondary sources to identify what to look for to indicate electoral base attachment, these "signal words" can also be derived from other sources. With constitutional party documents such as party constitutions and programmes of principles, the question is not so much whether they are present (since most parties have them at least in the countries under study) but how much value is put on what is expressed in them. They contain the "official ideological language" of the party, however, and this makes them very useful. Signal words derived from these documents can therefore be seen as strong indications of ideological attachment. Similarly, secondary sources might point us towards certain traditions prevalent in a certain party, especially in comparison with parties in the same party family.

4.5.4 Identity of defectors

The next variable to be operationalised is the control variable of the identity of the defectors during the crisis election: which votes were lost? The conceptualisation of this particular variable is based on the concept of the normal vote: were the votes lost those of loyal voters who almost always supported the party, or were they floating voters won in the last election? The key operational concern here is what baseline to compare it to: how do we determine what a party's normal vote is? In his original formulation of the concept, Converse makes a complicated calculation taking advantage of the American two-party system. In multi-party contexts, such an operationalisation based on "equal rates of defection between the parties" is not possible.[63] The concept has been adapted to a multi-party concept but the complexity of such models of the normal vote in a multi-party system are beyond the scope of this study.[64]

However, since the normal vote is a baseline constructed on the basis of variations in the election results of a party between elections, it can be approximated by taking an average of past electoral performances. This should suffice for our purposes, since all we need to know is whether the election result before the shock occurred was higher or lower than usual. If it is above average, then it is at least likely that a larger part of the voters that deserted the party in the shock defeat will have been floating voters. If it is below average, then it seems likely that the proportion of core voters will in general be higher. Following Converse, five elections before but not including the shock election will be used to calculate this.[65] Many parties will have their own electoral research done after an election. This means that, of course, the evidence obtained by comparing the election preceding the shock to the average calculated in this way can and should be cross-referenced with the evidence arising from this to see if the party comes to a similar conclusion.

Another operational question on this control variable is where it comes in. Since the variable is intended to control for the possibility that functional considerations (winning

63. P.E. Converse, "The Concept of a Normal Vote," in *Elections and the Political Order*, ed. A. Campbell et al. (New York: John Wiley / Sons, 1966), 27.

64. For example: Anker, *Normal Vote Analysis*.

65. Converse, "The Concept of a Normal Vote," 21.

back the lost votes in the most direct way) rather than institutional ones determine the party's strategy. This means that it is specifically a rival to the effects of electoral base attachment and ideological attachment. It is also constrained in the same way by the electoral system: a plan designed to win back those voters lost in the shock election can be more or less viable based on the effects of the electoral system. Therefore, like electoral base attachment and ideological attachment, it will be seen as impacting via the formation of a preference for a strategy, which means it has the most influence during the first electoral cycle.

4.5.5 External factors

The model formulated in chapter three makes a distinction between the way internal and external factors can be expected to impact upon the recovery process. While the internal factors impact upon the response in a more direct way, through the formation of preferences at the start of the process, external factors are conceived as impacting as constraints on the party acting on those formed preferences. This creates a temporal difference between the two: while the internal factors are present from the start, external factors only enter into the model later on, and their effects should therefore only become visible later on.

To operationalise this in a simple way, this study proposes to take advantage of the two-cycle time period under study. To measure the potential constraining effect of the external environment, we make the assumption that the external environment only enters into consideration after a new evaluation point in the form of an election. As an election provides evidence of the success or failure of the chosen course of action, it is likely to give grounds to reconsider some elements of it in light of the prevailing external environment. Even if external factors did impact during the first electoral cycle, it is entirely plausible that if the strategy adopted during this cycle does not work, the party might pay more attention to its environment and be willing to compromise on its initial preferences. This is a somewhat strong assumption, but the alternative would be to argue a separate point in each case when external influences started to act to constrain a party's actions, which could introduce all sorts of idiosyncrasies. By contrast, using this admittedly strong assumption we could compare the strategies during the first and second electoral cycle to see whether it has changed in response to potential external factors.

4.5.5.1 Electoral system

The proposition on the impact of electoral systems developed in the previous chapter only refers to one characteristic of the electoral system that is most important to electoral recovery – the way in which votes are translated to seats, the so-called mechanical effects of the electoral system.[66] The previous chapter's proposition makes a distinction in this regard between majoritarian and proportional electoral systems.

Admittedly, there are many mixed forms in between these two extremes. However, as the comparative research design only involves two countries which were deliberately

66. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 266; A. Blais et al., "The Mechanical and Psychological Effects of Electoral Systems: a Quasi-Experimental Study," *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 12 (2011): 1600.

selected at the extremes, it is best to keep the operationalisation of the electoral system simple. After all, the comparative design already accounts for two very different environments. In the chapters on the separate parties, therefore, the electoral system will be represented simply by the mechanism by which it returns members of the lower house of Parliament – either a majoritarian First Past the Post system or a Proportional Representation system. This should be enough for now to make inferences on the basic effect of the most important characteristic of electoral systems to this study on the choice of the recovery strategy.

4.6 Conclusion: testing the propositions and the importance of sequence

Using the methodology and operationalisation presented above, we can proceed to test the six propositions formulated in chapter three. In doing so, it is vitally important to pay attention to the temporal dimension of the argument, operationalised by using the two electoral cycles following the electoral defeat. This is particularly important for testing propositions 3 through 6, which concern the 'how'-stage. After all, propositions 1 and 2, which test the model at the 'whether'-stage do not depend on the possibility of changes to the strategy: a party either diagnoses the crisis and formulates a strategy or does neither of these things. In addition, since all cases were selected from a population of parties which had suffered a crisis, the probability of one of our four cases not diagnosing a crisis is very low. In the likely event that no party fails to diagnose a crisis, the test of the proposition will therefore rely solely on within-case evidence. Here, temporal sequencing is important, as the speed with which the party acts after a crisis can be an indication of reluctance to diagnose the crisis.

Since all the independent variables involved in propositions 3 through 5 were conceptualised as impacting on the preference formation of political parties, the first-cycle strategy is key to testing these propositions. Regardless of what changes later, for the effects to be as proposed in our model, what is important is that the strategy the party settles on before the next election (our first point of measurement) takes the form that is to be expected based on the proposition. Likewise, for proposition 6 on electoral systems to be confirmed, we need to observe a change of strategy between the two cycles where the constraints of the electoral system would run counter to the first-cycle strategy. Concretely, any British (FPTP) cases which show a reinforcement strategy in the first cycle should switch to an extension strategy, while Dutch (PR) cases showing a first-cycle extension strategy should switch to a reinforcement strategy.

The case studies presented in chapter 5 through 8 each form a building block of the comparative analysis to be presented in chapter 9, as well as an analysis of the recovery strategies and the variables involved in each case. The comparative analysis in chapter 9 will likely lead to the conclusion that a number of the propositions and indeed the model needs to be further refined. To this end, chapter 9 can also build on the case studies in a different way, bringing in the detailed evidence of the causal mechanism observed in the case studies to suggest the possible direction of this refinement. In this

way, the methodology outlined here will fulfill the dual purpose of this study: to test the propositions derived from the model we have constructed, and at the same time to generate data which can be used to suggest where this model can be further refined afterwards.

5 The Christian Democratic Appeal, 1994-2002

5.1 Introduction

In 1994, the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) suffered an unprecedented defeat for a major party in the Netherlands. Amidst an election in which more seats changed hands than at any previous post-war Dutch election, the party lost 20 of its 54 seats. Having led the government without interruption since its foundation in 1980 as a merger of three Christian parties, one of which was perpetually in government since World War II, the party now faced a "trek through the desert" of opposition. The use of this Biblical image is no overstatement of the difficulties faced: for a party which had a strong tradition of government going back to its predecessors, opposition was a particularly challenging prospect. In addition, speculation about the demise of Christian politics in the Netherlands resurfaced. The party was driven to reconsider its essentials and its place in the party system.

Considering the CDA's office-seeking character, Duncan has hypothesised using the Harmel and Janda model that the party would follow what we call an extension strategy.[1] He was, however, surprised that the CDA did not conform to this expectation. In fact, the CDA's desert years bring to mind other characteristics of the party. The party is relatively more ideological compared to others in its international party family.[2] The Dutch literature also finds this.[3] It also boasted the largest membership of all parties by far and had strong roots in the pillarized Christian mass parties that merged into it. Based on this picture of ideological and membership strength, one would expect the party's traditions to push it towards a reinforcement strategy. However, the party also faced the realities of partisan dealignment and the accompanying decline of its core support base, which should increase pressure towards the extension strategy. Overall, however, since the Proportional Representation system does not share the strong effect of a majoritarian electoral system towards the extension strategy and makes defection by core voters easier,

1. R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 74; F. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats During 'Purple Hague', 1994-8," *Party Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 69–87.

2. J.-E. Lane and S. O. Ersson, *Politics and Society in Western Europe* (London: Sage, 1994), 149; D. Hanley, "Introduction: Christian Democracy as a Political Phenomenon," in *Christian Democracy in Europe: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. D. Hanley (London and New York: Pinter, 1994), 5.

3. M. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen: Een geschiedenis van het CDA, 1980-2010," in *De Conjunctuur van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010*, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 170; G. Voerman, "Inleiding," in *De Conjunctuur van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010*, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 9-11.

one would expect a reinforcement strategy rather than an extension strategy.

This chapter is structured as follows. Section 5.2 sets the stage before outlining how the CDA scores on our independent variables: electoral base attachment, ideological attachment and the external environment, particularly the electoral system. The aim of this section is to translate the propositions generated in chapter three into specific testable expectations for this case. In section 5.3, a brief discussion of the defeat of 1994 follows. The bulk of the analysis in section 5.4 discusses how the variables measured up in section 5.2. led to the recovery strategy as it materialised, tracing it from its causes in the internal and external factors through the recommendations of the Gardeniers report towards the actions taken by the party. Finally, the conclusion brings it all together and highlights the most remarkable aspects of this individual case.

5.2 The CDA in 1994: setting the stage

In the model outlined in chapter 3, electoral base attachment and ideological attachment constitute major internal characteristics influencing the choice of recovery strategy. These characteristics, founded in the party's history, will recur prominently in this case. As Duncan argued after reviewing the varying scope of change in various areas of the CDA's recovery project, understanding its history is vital to understanding the route taken to recovery after the 1994 defeat.[4] Before moving on to the specific values of variables, some general points about the party's history have to be considered.

To understand the roots of the CDA, it is important first and foremost to understand what is known as the 'pillarization' of Dutch society. From the beginning of the 20th century through to the 1960s, Dutch society was split up between four distinct subcultures: Protestants, Catholics, socialists and liberals. Each of these four 'pillars' had their own associated political party, schools, trade unions, choirs, sports clubs, et cetera. Although it has to be noted that on the basis of criteria formulated by Lijphart not every pillar was as pillarised, he nevertheless saw it as an essential characteristic of Dutch democracy and postulated that Dutch democracy could be stable despite pillarisation because of the behaviour of the elites of each pillar.[5] The concept of pillarisation has been much-debated, with some scholars doubting whether it has not been overestimated.[6] Politically speaking, the pillars were so stable that one could at one point predict with a high degree of certainty the vote of a citizen based solely on his class and religious affiliation.[7]

It is outside the scope of this chapter to consider all the different theories proposed to explain the existence of these pillars. However, it is a highly important fact that the CDA's predecessors – the Catholic People's Party (*Katholieke Volkspartij*, KVP) and the Protestant Anti-Revolutionary Party (*Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, ARP) and Christian Historial Union (*Christelijk-Historische Unie*, CHU) – were the political arms of the most

4. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 84.

5. A. Lijphart, *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek* (1971; Haarlem: Becht, 1990 [1971]), 204.

6. For a discussion, see P. De Rooy, "Farewell to pillarization," *Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences* 33, no. 1 (1997): 27–41.

7. A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 25.

highly organised of the pillars. It perhaps explains the distance at which the CDA has remained the largest political party in the country based on membership numbers, as it inherited the membership of multiple highly organised mass parties like the KVP and ARP.[8]

Another salient point to make is that the disappearance of the pillars was particularly disruptive to the fortunes of the party's predecessors (despite small gains for the ARP), which between them had held at least half of the seats in Parliament at every election up until 1967. The formation of the CDA itself can therefore be seen as a process of dealing with several electoral shocks which represent the process of depillarisation and secularization of Dutch society that started in the 1960s. Ten Napel highlights the importance of several electoral shocks, starting in 1967, in bringing the three parties together.[9] At the 1967 parliamentary elections the three parties had no majority between them for the first time ever, leading to the first official discussions about cooperation between the parties a month later in March.[10] Further defeats in 1971 and 1972 provided impulses leading up to the formation of a federation in 1973, a joint list of candidates for the 1977 parliamentary elections and the formal merger in 1980.

By electoral performance and office-seeking standards, the merger was a success. Although beaten to plurality by the Dutch Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid*, PvdA) in its first election as a united force in 1977, the CDA leader Dries van Agt managed to secure the premiership, renewing it with a plurality of votes in 1981. The central position of the CDA in the Dutch political spectrum and the mutual exclusion of the PvdA and its centre-right VVD opponents gave the party an advantage that led to continuous dominance of the premiership by Christian Democrats, first by Van Agt and from 1982 by the longest-serving Dutch PM to date, Ruud Lubbers. This success can be seen as a contributing factor to the fact that the CDA has a strong orientation towards office, though this can also be seen to be due to its ideological focus on responsibility.[11] This dominance left an important governmental imprint on the CDA that, as we shall see, resurfaced in crisis.

Finally, let us consider the way the party organisation functioned and who the key actors were. In many ways, the CDA party organisation was typical for a Dutch party. Like most Dutch parties, its structure largely follows the electoral makeup of the Netherlands, with branches at each corresponding sub-national level. At each level, organs are constituted to take care of candidate selection and programme formation for elections. Unusually, its highest sub-national level of organisation was the influential regional branch (*Kamerkring*) based on the administrative electoral districts for national elections; it did not have provincial branches. At the national level, these powers were split between a

8. According to statistics gathered by the Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties at Groningen University, the CDA had approximately 30,000 more members than its closest competitor, the PvdA, in 1994. Even in the middle of the electoral crisis, 1998, the party still had 20,000 members more than the PvdA. Even if this is far less than its predecessors (and parties in general) in the 1950s and 1960s, the party seems to have taken pride in this despite the general decline in party membership across the board. Statistics found at http://dnpp.nl/dnpp/node/352 (Visited on 25th October 2017)

9. H.-M. Th. D. Ten Napel, "Een Eigen Weg: De Totstandkoming van het CDA (1952-1980)" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 1992), 334.

10. Ibid., 94-99.

11. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 72.

national congress and a party council.[12] Typically for Dutch political parties at that time, each level sent delegates to several higher-level bodies.

Given what we know about the office-oriented imprint of the party, it would stand to reason that its parliamentary party, the much-diminished party in office, would play an important role. Indeed, Dutch constitutional provisions on the free mandate of parliamentarians gave parliamentary parties in general a great deal of autonomy that allowed them to play a dominant role in their parties.[13] Since the party's supreme bodies, the national congress and party council, could only pass non-binding resolutions, the CDA parliamentary party would probably able, at least on the programmatic or tactical dimension, to impose a certain direction.[14] However, several factors weakened the parliamentary party as an actor in 1994. As a result of a lack of formal term limits[15] and the poor electoral performance of 1994, the parliamentary party was relatively old and socialised into a governmental context which hampered their effectiveness in opposition.[16] The departure of the top candidate on the list, who is normally considered the party's political leader by virtue of his selection to lead the list, also deprived his successors in the leadership of the authority inherent in this direct mandate from the national congress until 1998.[17]

Instead, the central role was assumed by the organs of the party organisation, particularly its executive, consisting of the 7-member national executive (*Dagelijks Bestuur*, DB) and the larger national committee (*Partijbestuur*, PB).[18] The national committee, charged with directing the administrative and political work of the party, consisted of the chairmen of the regional branches and a number of freely elected members elected by the party council, including the national executive.[19] It thus figures as a central meeting point between the central leadership and the interests of the branches. In the deliberations of the national committee, a strong weight is accorded to balance both among regions and

12. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1985, art. 67 and 69, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9483`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

13. *Constitution of the Netherlands*, Official translation, art. 57.3.

14. R. A. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij: Veranderende Partijorganisatie in Nederland 1960-1990* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1992), 251.

15. "Reglement voor de voorbereiding van kandidaatstelling voor de verkiezingen der leden van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal", art. 2g. Found in Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Kandidaatstellingen," 1980, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9482`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie" (1994), inventory nr. 1678, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, p. 31.

16. The CDA parliamentary party elected in 1994 had served an average 8.1 years in Cabinet or Parliament before and was therefore old compared to the PvdA (6.5) and the VVD (7.4). Calculation by the author based on biographical data obtained from Parlement.com.

17. This assumption that the top candidate is also the leader is also evident in the report of the Gardeniers Commission (CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 30), when it notes that the early designation by Lubbers of Brinkman as top candidate and his successor is described as having been intended to avert a succession crisis (*kroonprinsenstrijd*).

18. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1985, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9483`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; R. S. Katz and P. Mair, eds., *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies* (London: SAGE, 1994).

19. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1985, art. 73, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9483`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

among the "blood groups" of the party, the former members of the three predecessors and direct members of the CDA.[20] Although the formal fusion protocol[21] which governed this balance after the merger was terminated prematurely, there is still a strong imprint of accommodation. This is especially true when it comes to the candidate lists and the party officers such as the chairmanship.[22]

Notably, the unifying role of the national committee is exemplified by its chairman. It should be kept in mind that in contrast to parties in other countries, the chairmen of Dutch political parties do not lead the party politically but act as head of its extra-parliamentary organisation. As a young organisation, the CDA chose to appoint relatively heavy-weight party chairmen like former minister Piet Bukman, who were able to keep the party's house in order.[23] This leading role of the party chairman, as we shall see, was carried through during the crisis. Especially as regards the executive, it is worthwhile to note that it was also a forum for regional and "blood group" interests.

The two highest representative bodies in the party organisation were the national congress (*Partijcongres*), composed of municipal delegates, and party council (*Partijraad*), composed largely of district delegates.[24] While the national congress figures mostly as a *toogdag*, a membership outing mostly intended to reinforce party cohesion, the party council was regarded as an influential body whose most important powers were to give political directions and adopt candidate lists and manifestoes.[25] However, there were serious concerns about the functioning of not only the congress but also the council by 1994, levelling the charge of being an "applause machine"[26].[27]

Perhaps because of the need for unity in the young merged party, there was a large degree of concentration of powers in the party organisation. One body prepared the meetings of another. The national executive, by preparing the decision-making of the larger national committee, acted as a crucial influence on its decisions.[28] Likewise, the national committee's membership of both the committee and the council, resulted in a

20. See R. A. Koole and J. J. M. van Holsteyn, "Religie of regio? Over de bloedgroepen van het CDA," in *De Conjunctuur van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010*, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 131–154; Also noted in CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie."

21. CDA, "Statuten en Kandidaatstellingen," 3-13.

22. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen," 68

The Catholic inaugural leader, Van Agt, was balanced by an ARP party chairman, Bukman. When Bukman left, the impulse was to appoint a former CHU member, but none could be found, leading to the election of direct member Van Velzen. Similarly, 1994 saw the election of the Catholic Hans Helgers to work opposite Protestant parliamentary leaders Brinkman and Heerma.

23. Ibid.

24. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1985, art. 67 and 69, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9483`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

25. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Boll Commission, *Appèl en Weerklank* (The Hague: CDA, 1983), 115-116; Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 9.

26. In the Dutch jargon, the qualification "applause machine" describes a body which, while formally empowered to make decisions, is mostly concerned with projecting unity and following the directions of the leadership.

27. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie" (1994), inventory nr. 1678, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 37.

28. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 114.

large degree of control over the party council.[29] This was a source of discontent in the party, which struggled with the lack of effectiveness arising from these problems and a lack of preparation on behalf of the delegates. In the opinion of the Gardeniers evaluation commission, this impaired the direction-setting abilities of the council.[30] In a similar way, which also provoked much discussion, nominations were usually prepared well in advance, with the national committee often proposing a single name which was elected without a formal counter-candidate.[31] Hillebrand remarks in the context of a study of selection for the 1986 elections that the national committee and in particular the chairman, secretary and parliamentary leader dominated the procedure.[32] The central decision-makers in all these fields, in this way, can be easily located in the form of the national committee and executive. Having considered all this, let us now turn to how the CDA's character as a party and the environment in which it operated translate into the independent variables used in our model.

5.2.1 Electoral base attachment

The CDA was selected as a party with high electoral base attachment. Though the merged party committed from the start to "appealing to the whole of the Dutch population" in its statutes[33], signifying its catch-all nature, it maintained many of the historical and institutional links showing the mass party roots of its predecessors. The CDA has always prided itself on its strong presence in civil society, with the overwhelming percentage of the membership being a member of a church and a majority actively volunteering in that context, though it maintained no formal links to any group.[34] The party thus inherited strong ties to its base constituency, whose loyalty was also expressed in a membership total that was even by 1994 by far the largest of all Dutch parties (see section 5.2). This was complemented by strong informal and personal ties with organisations in civil society which shared the party's ideological orientation, who often also supplied it with candidates for public office.[35] Koole notes that even after the foundation of the CDA,

29. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Beknopt memo discussie in Partijbestuur over rapport Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig, 23 september 1994," Memo on the debate in the National Committee on the Klaassen report (1994), SC/9403089/cb.lvb, inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

30. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 37.

31. This singular nomination practice continued for the Party Chairmanship until 2002, when Marja van Bijsterveldt was elected by the members in a direct election between two candidates. For the top candidate, it continued with only a single exception in the form of the 2012 leadership election, although the intention to hold such an election was also expressed in 2017. In all these cases, there was the formal opportunity to nominate a counter-candidate, which was, however, seldom used.

32. R. Hillebrand, *De Antichambre van het Parlement: Kandidaatstelling in Nederlandse Politieke Partijen* (Leiden: DSWO, 1992), 54.

33. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1985, art. 3, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9483`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University

34. J. J. M. Van Holsteyn, R. A. Koole, and J. Elkink, "Marginaal of midden in de maatschappij? Leden van CDA, D66, PvdA en VVD en hun activiteiten in de samenleving," *Beleid en Maatschappij* 29, no. 2 (2002): 72.

35. K. Van Kersbergen, "De christendemocratische feniks en de moderne, niet-seculiere politiek," chap. 197-216 in *De Conjunctuur van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010*, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 203.

the organisations of the KVP in particular maintained a considerable amount of influence within the parliamentary party.[36] The main expression of electoral base attachment in the case of the CDA is through these personal ties.

These personal ties are complemented by informal norms and conventions underscoring the importance of its loyal supporters to the party. This is in part expressed by pride and confidence in the strength of its large membership organisation in official documents.[37] More specifically concerning the Christian character of the base, the informal conventions surrounding the party's electoral base attachment also found expression in a touchiness in parts of the party which surfaced whenever somebody proposed concrete measures to involve those of non-Christian faiths to a greater extent. This is in part ideological, as revealed by the fact that it usually included a suspicion that the 'C' in the party's name, a symbol for its Christian inspiration, would be terminally downplayed.[38]

On balance, therefore, the CDA of 1994 can be considered to be strongly attached to its base. This is further reinforced by the confidence in the base of the Gardeniers report, which appears to have resonated strongly within the party. This belief in the base of the party is referred to as the "people's party character" (*volkspartijkarakter*) in the CDA lingo and recurs often in archival documents discussing base and membership.[39] Electoral studies showed that the CDA's base vote had not stopped declining, a fact also echoed in the party's own evaluations of the 1994 elections.[40] The party, for this reason, was very much dependent on the floating vote to maintain its high level of electoral performance throughout its merged existence. Nevertheless, on balance the CDA shows itself rooted in and attached to its inherited base in the remnants of the three confessional pillars to a large extent.

It is important to consider what this means in terms of our model. In the model described in chapter three, a higher degree of electoral base attachment entails a stronger resistance to broadening the base beyond the original base the party is attached to. Therefore, despite the demographic decline of its base, the high degree of electoral base attachment leads to the expectation of a reinforcement strategy. If the effect is not uniform as in the simplest form of proposition 3, then at least there should be an impact leading to the party narrowing its appeal on the tactical dimension and introducing measures to empower the membership.

36. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 266.

37. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 11-12.

38. For example: Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst van het Partijbestuur van het CDA d.d. 17 november 2000", Conclusions of the National Committee Meeting, 17th of November 2000 (2000), Anonymous Personal Archive consisting of National Committee Minutes, CDA Central Office, the Hague, p. 4.

39. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Klaassen Commission, "Beknopte versie," Condensed version of the Klaassen report *Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig.* (1994), inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 1; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Klaassen Commission, "Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig: Voorstellen ter Versterking van de Organisatie van het CDA," Final report of the Klaassen Commission (1994), WPEA/9491721.04/MG, inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 8-9; 29.

40. Van Kersbergen, "De christendemocratische feniks en de moderne, niet-seculiere politiek," 201-202; CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16.

5.2.2 Ideological Attachment

Although its office-seeking bend is undeniable and well-founded in its history, theorists such as Lane and Errson and Hanley have registered that compared to its sister parties in other nations, the CDA is more principled and scores highest on a programmatic focus.[41] This is a theme also found in the Dutch literature, where the strong programmatic and ideological basis was identified as particularly important when the party went through a crisis.[42]

Throughout the process leading up to the merger, we find what can be argued to be one of the most important antecedents of its principled nature: the heated discussions on the Biblical foundations of the new party. The question here was whether the Bible should be an inspiration for a party with an open basis (as some in the KVP advocated) or the actual cornerstone of the new party (as the ARP wanted).[43] The party's founding father, Steenkamp, resolved this by formulating the "response philosophy" in his influential paper *Towards a Responsible Society* (*Op weg naar een verantwoordelijke maatschappij*). This concept that not the gospel itself but a political response to it should bind the party together, proved to be "the formula that superseded all three party cultures".[44] It still forms article 2 of the CDA's programme of principles: "The political convictions of the CDA are shaped *in response to* the appeal of the Bible. (...) This Programme of Principles gives expression to those convictions".[45] The response philosophy and its four accompanying principles of differentiated responsibility, stewardship, solidarity and public justice form a strong foundation for the party, and have proven to be enduringly strong, although as Duncan suggests that this may also be due to the fractious discussions this compromise resolved.[46]

The importance attributed to the 'C', to the concept of a 'responsible society' and to the programme of principles in general is, therefore, a surprising qualifier on what is otherwise an office-seeking party. This surprise must be qualified, however: in such a young party as the merged CDA, a unifying factor such as the response philosophy, must be jealously guarded, even becoming to some extent a founding myth of some sort. In the discussion on the party's informal electoral base attachment above, this was already briefly touched upon with reference to the defensiveness that surfaced whenever accommodating those of non-Christian faiths was proposed. This demonstrates that across the party, active members were very keen to preserve their party's Christian heritage. Moreover, the evaluation report authored in 1994 by the Gardeniers Commission casts the party's ideology as a strength rather than a weakness, with reference to the "responsible society".[47]

41. Lane and Ersson, *Politics and Society in Western Europe*, 149; Hanley, "Introduction," 5.
42. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen," 70.
43. Ten Napel, "Een Eigen Weg," 177.
44. Hoogendijk in ibid., 177, translation by the author of this dissertation.
45. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Program van Uitgangspunten CDA," 1993, italics added. Original text: "In antwoord op de oproep van de Bijbel krijgt de politieke overtuiging van het CDA gestalte. (...) Dit Program van Uitgangspunten geeft uitdrukking aan deze politieke overtuiging.", accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9872`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
46. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 73; see also Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen," 106.
47. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 11-12.

This Christian Democratic basic principle complements the "people's party character" which expresses the party's informal electoral base attachment and expresses a strong symbolism for the party that cannot be disregarded.

As a part of this symbolism, the ideological attachment of the CDA complements and reinforces the expected effect of electoral base attachment towards the reinforcement strategy. After all, the model stipulates that ideological attachment leads to a reinforcement strategy because it presents a strong part of the party's institutional identity that prejudices against the extension strategy, which usually changes away from the party's roots. Combined with the expectation based on electoral base attachment, therefore, this leads to the expectation that the CDA would pursue a reinforcement strategy out of the gate.

5.2.3 External environment: electoral and party system

As discussed in chapter 4, the Dutch electoral system can be said to be one of the most radically proportional in the world. This was also the case in 1994, as demonstrated by the high Rose index of proportionality of 97.65[48] at this election.[49] During and even after the pillarization period, the political landscape was dominated by three major ideological subcurrents – the Christian Democratic tradition of the CDA and its predecessors; its main competitor to the left, the social democratic Labour Party (PvdA); and the growing conservative-liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) to the right from 1960. These parties usually controlled well over a 100 seats in the 150-seat lower house, even in 1994.[50]

However, the low threshold in this extremely proportional electoral system indisputably leads to great potential for new parties, which started entering the party system again from the 1960s onwards.[51] As Mair observes, this use of the relatively open party system coincides with the loosening of the pillarized cleavage structure.[52] A few of these parties became (at least for the moment) permanent fixtures, such as Democrats 66 (D66), Democratic Socialists '70 (DS'70) and the Radical Political Party (PPR). This contrasts with the earlier stability of the party system after the second World War, where rarely more than 20 out of 150 seats changed parties at any election. With 34 seats (over a fifth) changing hands, 1994 represented a new record. According to figures presented by Mair, the 1994 election was only surpassed by the system-shaking elections of 1994 in Italy and 1958 in France in terms of level of volatility.[53] Over the entire 1990s, Mair finds that

48. Calculated by the author based on data from H. Döring and P. Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)," Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, `http://www.parlgov.org`.

49. The Rose index is calculated by subtracting the sum of the differences between each party's voteshare and seatshare at a given election, divided by two, from 100. See R. Rose, ed., *International Encyclopedia of Elections* (Washington: CQ Press, 2000)

50. Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."

51. Although the effect of PR was also visible in the pre-war years, see also K. Vossen, *Vrij vissen in het Vondelpark: Kleine politieke partijen in Nederland 1918-1940* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2003), 37.

52. P. Mair, "Electoral Volatility and the Dutch Party System: a Comparative Perspective," *Acta Politica* 43 (2008): 241-242.

53. Ibid., 239.

the Netherlands was the second-most volatile electorate in Western Europe.[54] The 1994 election saw the creation of two senior citizens' parties (the General Pensioners Union (AOV) and Union 55+), which were in direct electoral competition with the CDA and entered into Parliament with a combined 7 seats.[55]

The low electoral threshold also has consequences for the number of minor parties. Though the number of parties with seats in Parliament increased from 7 in the first post-war election to 11 in 1994, there was already a great diversity of parties, in particular within Dutch Christian politics. These smaller religious parties were exclusively of an orthodox Protestant persuasion. Two of them originated in church splits, but the third, the Reformatory Political Federation (RPF), split from the ARP in the 70s as a response to the cooperation with the Catholics. Most were rather more conservative than the CDA, evidenced in their usually being bundled under the term of the "small Christian right". There was therefore competition for parts of the CDA's core vote.[56] According to the model presented of chapter three, the presence of other parties in the same party family should lead to a pressure towards the reinforcement strategy.

The low barriers to enter into the party system mean that as dealignment continued, competition to established parties like the CDA was always an option. The rise of the AOV and Union 55+ in 1994 no doubt has something to do with the fact that the CDA was seen as wanting to cut pensions (and the party itself agreed with this assessment). In the Gardeniers report, the party would signal that the senior citizens constituency had to some extent returned to the party between the municipal and national elections of 1994.[57] Nevertheless, the threat posed by these newcomers to part of the CDA's core electorate acts as part of the overall effect of the electoral system to reinforce pressures towards a reinforcement strategy if the model is born out.

5.2.4 Overview and expectations

The configuration of the independent variables in the CDA case is simple, as can be seen in table 5.1. It is not difficult, therefore, to generate expectations on the course of events that is likely to unfold in this case. The party scores high on both electoral base attachment and ideological attachment. This means that proposition 3 and 4 (and by extension propositions 5a through 5c) point in the same direction. For these propositions to be supported by the data in this case, the party should display a preference towards the reinforcement strategy and therefore pursue a reinforcement strategy in the first cycle following the electoral defeat. As for proposition 6 on the effect of electoral systems, the PR system the party operates in favours the reinforcement strategy. Therefore, we should not see the CDA change course after the 1998 election, and it should remain on the reinforcement trajectory at the end of the second electoral cycle.

54. Mair, "Electoral Volatility and the Dutch Party System," 238.

55. Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."

56. Although in 2002, the party's campaign handbook noted that the main competitors were the VVD and the PvdA and that there was less overlap with the smaller parties, including the Christian right: Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Campagnewijzer Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2002" (2002), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague.

57. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16.

Table 5.1: Overview of the Independent Variables: the CDA in 1994

Internal factors	**Measurement**	**Expected Strategy**
Electoral base attachment	Strong (personal ties)	Reinforcement
Ideological attachment	Strong	Reinforcement
External environment		
Electoral system	Proportional Representation	Reinforcement
Previous election	Above average (+2,9%)	Extension

5.3 The 1994 General Election defeat

The leadup to the 1994 General Election had already spelled trouble for the CDA. The 12-year premiership and party leadership of Ruud Lubbers was coming to an end and by established party tradition, he was succeeded by the parliamentary party chairman, Elco Brinkman. The two, however, had clashed in the run-up to the election over various issues, primarily in the field of the welfare state, with Brinkman being regarded as more right-wing than the Prime Minister, and during the campaign, their relationship remained fractious.[58] The matter came to a head publicly when the Prime Minister announced he would be casting his preference vote for a candidate lower on the list rather than his successor, which was widely portrayed as backstabbing Brinkman.[59] Lubbers himself recorded in his memoirs that this had not been his intention, and that with hindsight he should not have done it, but he did acknowledge that the differences between him and Brinkman caused friction.[60]

In addition, the municipal elections held earlier that year went particularly badly for the party. A statement by an economist on the manifesto committee that the CDA "would not exempt pension law" from the proposed reforms of the welfare state went down badly with the party's many older voters.[61] In the municipal elections, they turned away from the party towards newly organised senior citizens' parties AOV and Unie 55+.

In the 1994 general election, the party lost 20 of its 54 seats in Parliament, reaching its lowest level of electoral performance so far. This is well above the rule of thumb of a third of the seats defined in chapter three. The crisis was further aggravated by the looming loss of government office.[62] It reopened the debate around the party's foundation about the future of Christian democracy in an increasingly secular society, thereby causing exactly the kind of re-evaluation that our theory, following the literature, assumes happens in the event of a crisis.

With regard to the way the 1994 election defeat related to the previous performance

58. See M. Metze, *De Stranding: het CDA van Hoogtepunt naar Catastrofe* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1995), 236; R. F. M. Lubbers, *Persoonlijke Herinneringen* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2018), 196.

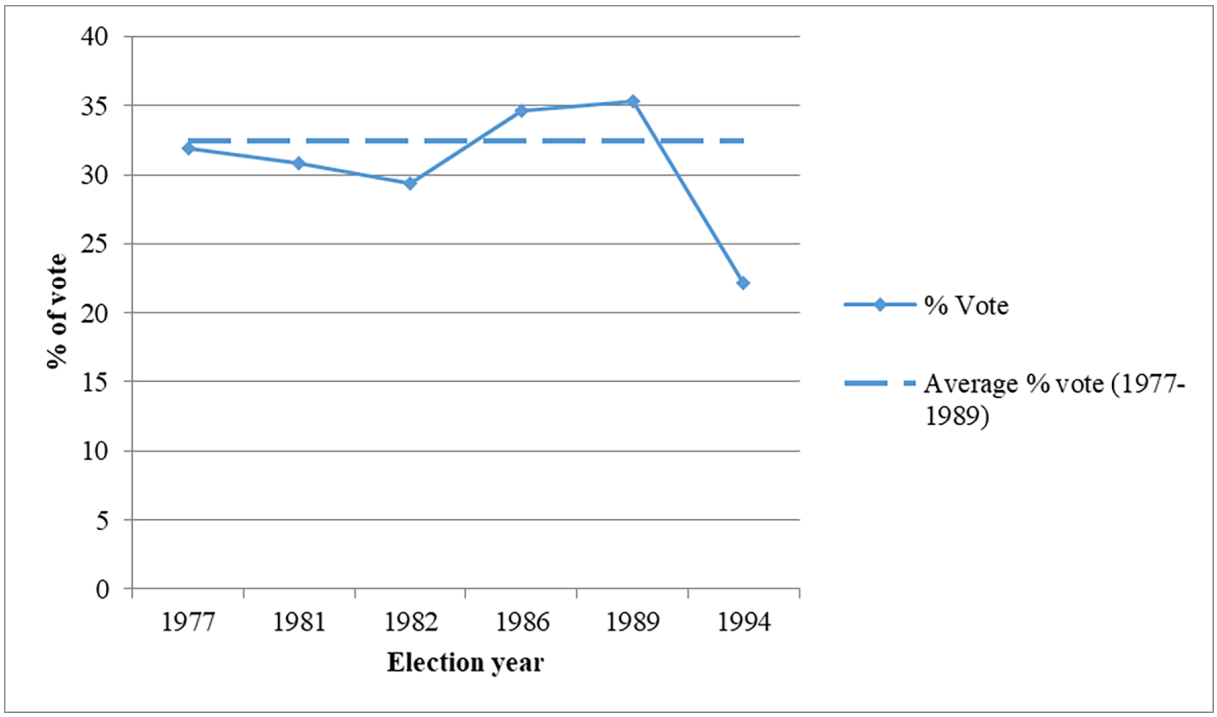
59. Metze, *De Stranding*, 237-238.

60. Lubbers, *Persoonlijke Herinneringen*, 196.

61. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen," 84.

62. There was still a chance of retaining government office and joining the new PvdA-led coalition was not ruled out. However, D66 was pushing for a cabinet without the CDA, and when PvdA and VVD overcame their differences to join the "Purple" cabinet, the CDA was left with no choice but opposition.

Figure 5.1: Electoral performance of the CDA, 1977-1994



of the party and the identity of those who deserted the party, the picture is mixed, as can be seen in figure 5.1.[63] Over the five elections between 1977 and 1989, the party had polled an average of 32,4% of the vote. At 35,3%, the 1989 election was, with 2,9%, slightly above this average. By contrast, the 1994 election, at which the party polled only 22,2% of the vote, is 10,2% below the average. Employing the rough operationalisation of the identity of the defectors given in chapter 4, this would mean that the party had lost core voters as well as non-core voters. Some of the evidence the party itself had, which describes the largest losses as having taken place among young (below age 24), urban and irreligious voters, which are all more likely to be non-core voters, although big losses were also recorded in the Province of North Brabant and among voters between 35 and 49, where the party had historically been stronger.[64] Combining this with the fact that the final election before the shock was above-average, there must have been a significant amount of non-core voters that deserted the party, as well as core voters.

Indeed, this fits what we know about the vulnerability of the CDA as a result of partisan dealignment and rising levels of volatility.[65] This decline of the party's Christian base was already reason for pessimism around the time of its formation. As a consequence, the CDA was more dependent on the floating vote, and would become increasingly dependentin the future. The Gardeniers Commission showed itself aware of this.[66] Combined with the election result, this would mean that if the party wanted to return to its previous level of performance, it would have to win non-core voters as well as core voters back. A purely functional strategy would therefore lean towardsthe extension strategy so as to

63. Based on data from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."
64. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16.
65. Van Kersbergen, "De christendemocratische feniks en de moderne, niet-seculiere politiek," 201-202.
66. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16.

win back the required non-core voters.This runs counter to the expectations derived from the institutional variables in our model, and should thus provide an interesting test of the model's central idea that party change after an external shock is driven by institutional rather than by purely functional factors.

5.4 The recovery strategy

As we have argued earlier in chapters three and four, the evaluations carried out by political parties are a prime source on the background of the recovery process. The CDA case is notable for the influence of its 1994 evaluation report, which resonated strongly with the embattled party. This resonance is evidenced from the very start by the many positive reactions to the report summarised in the national committee papers.[67] This, in turn, suggests that its fundamental analysis was recognised and shared by many in the CDA. Therefore, we can conclude that this positive, ideological appraisal of what the CDA was and what it was for seems to have been shared at least by those in the party that were important to the recovery, and probably more broadly as well. This makes the Gardeniers report a valuable piece of evidence in linking the picture of the CDA's strengths and weaknesses in the literature via its recommendations to the actions, thereby allowing a clear evaluation of the propositions.[68]

Before diving into a detailed discussion of the recovery strategy, discussion of this influential report is therefore in order. The committee was set up shortly after the 1994 defeat by the national committee. Its chair was to be Councillor of State and former minister Til Gardeniers-Berendsen. The terms of reference were to look at the structural causes of the defeat.[69] Central question, according to then-acting party chair, Tineke Lodders, was whether the result reflected dissatisfaction with the way the party had approached the 1990s or whether there were more structural causes.[70] The commission itself emphasised repeatedly that it was not in the business of passing judgment on persons or apportioning blame, also at the urging of the national committee.[71]

67. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Beknopte samenvatting ontvangen reacties op rapport evaluatiecommissie," Summary of the reactions to the Gardeniers Report (1994), inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 2 juni 1994, gehouden in het SBI-congrescentrum te Doorn," Minutes of the National Committee, 2nd of July 1994 (1994), PB/9453766V/ps, inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 5.

68. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen," 108; Lane and Ersson, *Politics and Society in Western Europe*, 149.

69. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 3; 45; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 6 mei 1994, gehouden in vergadercentrum 'Hoog Brabant' te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee, 6th of May 1994 (1994), PB/9453193V/ps, inventory nr. 1678, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 4.

70. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 6 mei 1994, gehouden in vergadercentrum 'Hoog Brabant' te Utrecht," 2.

71. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 8; CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 6 mei 1994, gehouden in vergadercentrum 'Hoog Brabant' te Utrecht," 4.

Reference has already been made above to what the Gardeniers report signifies for the evaluation of electoral base attachment, ideological attachment and external challenges it presents. We also know that the report resonated strongly within the party and got many positive reactions.[72] This is important because it signifies that the report's core analysis of the party as strong ideologically and in terms of membership but facing the challenge of a declining core vote was taken to heart. Decision-makers, therefore, can be assumed to take mostly the same line in assessing the parties strengths and vulnerabilities as the Gardeniers report did. This assessment also, significantly, matches up with the measurements of the independent variables in section 5.2. This is important to keep in mind as the recovery strategy is discussed, since connecting these attitudes to the measures allows a judgment of the internal versus the external pressures. In general, the former should push the party in the direction of the reinforcement strategy, while the latter should push the party in the direction of the extension strategy.

The Gardeniers report appears in the recovery process as a central thread running through the recovery process. Therefore, the analysis below of the 1994-1998 period starts with describing the relevant parts of the Gardeniers analysis and recommendations in each area. Special attention should be paid as to whether the strong conviction that the party's ideology and membership were strong and the threat of demographic decline led to the expected recommendations, and to what extent these were implemented. As we shall see, this offers strong evidence about the strength of internal factors in the case of the CDA, even after a further demoralising defeat in 1998.

5.4.1 Strong foundations? 1994-1998

There was a leadership change immediately following the election, with the Party Chairman, Van Velzen, taking responsibility for the electoral defeat and resigning. He was succeeded by former prison director Hans Helgers after a brief interim period under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman, Tineke Lodders. The party leader, Brinkman, would resign in Augst 1994, pressured by the national executive into resignation because they were unsure he could lead the party to recovery in opposition (much to the consternation of some on the national committee).[73] A shift of power within the party ensued, for various reasons. One was the struggle of the new parliamentary party with its new role in opposition. Brinkman's successor as party leader and parliamentary party chairman, Enneüs Heerma, was a safe pair of hands who struggled to project the party line in Parliament, and was replaced in 1997 by the younger Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.[74] The high average incumbency of the parliamentary party that has already been noted meant that almost all of its members were socialised in the role of supporting the government. It

72. CDA, National Committee, "Beknopte samenvatting ontvangen reacties op rapport evaluatiecommissie"; CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 2 juni 1994, gehouden in het SBI-congrescentrum te Doorn," 5.

73. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het Partijbestuur d.d. 5 september 1994", Minutes of the National Committee, 5th of September 1994 (1994), inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

74. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen," 91.

was therefore ill-equipped for opposition, and the parliamentary party seemed an unlikely candidate at best to lead the way for change.

This, in turn, perhaps in response to the criticism of the Gardeniers report, led to a new assertiveness of the national committee and particularly of the Party Chairmanship. The incoming party chairman would play a highly visible role in the recovery process as the extra-parliamentary party reasserted its influence. Important pressures towards renewal did not come from the struggling parliamentary group or indeed from the national committee, but from actors at a further distance such as the Research Institute.

5.4.1.1 Organisational changes, 1994-1998

The Gardeniers analysis strongly projects the image of a party which was proud of its large membership and convinced that it was part of its core strength, reflecting an informal norm reinforcing the party's electoral base attachment. In the very introduction of the report, the committee notes how inspiring the involvement of the membership in the process was.[75] This perhaps served to convince the committee that the CDA remained a 'bottom-up' organization, full of involved members who were its strength. In contrast, the committee was less kind to the party elite, whom it accused of technocratic smugness.[76] The national committee, in particular, had failed to balance the concerns of the membership with political pressures on the political leadership, leading to disgruntlement over the 1994 selection and manifesto processes.[77] In general, the erosion of checks and balances was observed to have allowed the technocratic and political concerns of leadership to prevail over the need for a clear Christian Democratic course.[78]

Relating all this to our model, the high degree of electoral base attachment (both personal and informal) should produce an organisational strategy shifting power towards the membership. The reasoning for this is that the membership provides the party with a valuable link to its core supporters in society and that strengthening the membership therefore could serve to make the party more attractive to them. This is only strengthened by the described disconnect between supporters and elites of the party, since it increases the need for such a strategy. The importance of the membership is also underlined by the prominence of the 'people's party character' (*volkspartijkarakter*) as a frame for discussion about the party organisation.[79] This term often recurs in the minutes of discussions on organizational reforms in the national committee[80] and in documents surrounding organization.[81] It bears remembering, in addition, that the party was the largest party in terms of membership numbers at some distance. All this leads to strengthen even further the expectation of a reinforcement strategy.

75. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 10.
76. Ibid., 29.
77. Ibid., 29-30.
78. Ibid., 30.
79. Ibid., 40.
80. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur van 13 mei 1996, gehouden in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee, 13th of May 1996 (1996), PB/9652215V/ps, inventory nr. 2805, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 2.
81. CDA, Klaassen Commission, "Beknopte versie," 1; CDA, Klaassen Commission, "Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig," 8-9; 29.

This expectation is borne out by the recommendations of the report and the way they were justified. The party had become too administrative in its orientation, and the closer involvement of members and sympathisers was seen as a solution, particularly in policy-making.[82] While going little into specifics, the Commission did specifically call for extended consultation of the membership, and therefore increased internal democracy.[83] This general thrust was taken up by the Klaassen Commission (also known as the *Appèl & Weerklank II* committee), a commission set up before 1994 under the chairmanship of regional branch chairman and executive member Leendert Klaassen to review the party organisation. Reconsidering its prepared recommendations in light of the evaluation of 1994, the commission recommended the introduction of membership elections on the election of "high-profile persons" such as the party chairman, the top candidate on the list (who is the party leader) and the top 50 candidates on the list.[84]

The national committee seems to have been ambivalent to this. First of all, two regional branch chairmen openly questioned the wisdom of an overhaul of the party structure while the party was in dire straits.[85] Secondly, and more specifically, the national committee indicated that it was broadly supportive of the principle, but proposed a number of practical variants which included more limited and consultative versions.[86] Earlier, voices on the national committee had opposed the value of membership consultation on selection altogether.[87]

The party council, however, proved more unambiguously sympathetic. This is not surprising. Often when the national committee offered an election by acclamation in the absence of a countercandidate rather than nominating multiple candidates, currents of opposition to this practice surfaced.[88] At the committee session that discussed the proposals a majority supported membership elections, although not for the list.[89] In the 1997 revision of the statutes, a membership referendum initiated by the council on a specific issue[90]and the direct election of the party chairman (though not the top candidate), made

82. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 40-42.

83. Ibid., 41.

84. Ibid., 29-30.

85. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Concept-Partijbestuursstandpunt Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig," Draft National Committee response to *Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig* (1995), inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 4.

86. Ibid., 15-16.

87. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 14 oktober 1994," Minutes of the National Committee, 14th of October 1994 (1994), PB/9453766V/ps, inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

88. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 10 juni 1995," Papers of the Party Council, 10th of June 1995 (1995), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 23 november 1996," Papers of the Party Council, 23rd of November 1996 (1996), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague.

89. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Verslag Parallelsessie II Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig op 10 juni in de Reehorst in Ede," Report on the parallel session on the Klaassen report at the Party Council on the 10th of June 1995 (1995), inventory nr. 1681, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, p. 3.

90. Though this is left implicit, it can safely be presumed that this option was meant to cover matters of policy, because elections of party officeholders and candidates were covered elsewhere.

it to practice.[91] It should be noted, however, that there would not be a contested election for the chairmanship for the duration of the crisis.[92]

Further steps were planned in the area of membership involvement. The working group 'Political Party New Style' (PPNS) was instituted by the national executive in 1996 to make the party more attractive to "socially-active people" (*"maatschappelijk betrokken mensen"*) as a result of an action plan formulated by Helgers.[93] Although some regional branches immediately offered themselves as pilot locations, the enthusiasm seems to have waned quickly and attendance at grassroots meetings to implement the PPNS proposals was noted to be disappointing.[94] After the report of PPNS, which recommended various smaller initiatives, the only one that seems to have led to structural change was the creation of differentiated types of membership, introduced only in 2003.[95]

It seems hard to get at the reason why PPNS failed where Klaassen succeeded. Likely, issues of power were involved, as evidenced by the ambivalence of the national committee to membership consultation which also resulted in the more limited scope of One Member, One Vote (OMOV) involvement of the membership in selection (through direct elections) and policy-making (through referenda) than Klaassen recommended.[96] Important though the chairman was, the proposals to elect the top candidate and the list via OMOV would have constituted far more extensive reforms. It is likely that though the national committee was convinced by the arguments that the membership was a vital resource to be tapped, issues of power and influence may have limited the scope of the reforms.

The same seems to have been the case in another major area of organisational reforms proposed by the Gardeniers Committee: the unsatisfactory performance of the party

91. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1997, art. 58g and 59a1, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9485`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

92. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 5 juni 1999," Papers of the Party Council, 5th of June 1999 (1999), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 10.

93. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur, gehouden op vrijdag 16 februari 1996, in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee, 16th of February 1996 (1996), PB/9652101V/ps, inventory nr. 2805, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 5.

94. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 21 oktober 1996, gehouden in vergadercentrum Pax Christi te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee, 21st of October 1996 (1996), PB/9652385V/ps, inventory nr. 2806, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 5; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé vergadering CDA Partijbestuur d.d. 12 mei 1997 gehouden in vergadercentrum Pax Christi te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee Meeting, 12th of May 1997 (1997), PB/9752321V/ps, inventory nr. 2984, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 3-4, p. 3-4.

95. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, *Politieke Partij Nieuwe Stijl* Working Group, "Concrete Acties naar Partijvernieuwing," Draft of the Report (1996), report nr. 9600810 version 4, inventory nr. 2806, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 7-9; Implementation found in the 2003 statutes revision: Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement," 2003, art. 5.2 statutes and art. 2 HR, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9486`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

96. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 14 oktober 1994."

council.[97] Here, the findings seemed to have been shared in a fashion similar to the area of membership involvement. After all, the ineffectiveness of the party council was and remained a complaint in discussions on organisation. Discussing the issue, the national committee pointed out that a lack of preparation time and pressure put on the regional chairmen by their membership of the national committee, seems to have been unhelpful.[98]

The size of the party council was also seen as part of the problem by the Klaassen Commission. The recommendations of the Klaassen report about the party council were mostly concerned with the numbers. The committee proposed that after the move from regional to provincial branches which it proposed, the number of party council delegates allotted to each association relative to their membership would be decreased.[99] Like membership consultation, this seems to have run into concerns of power and influence within the party, because these proposals failed to make it to the 1997 revision of the statutes.[100] A reform to the national congress limiting its membership to municipal delegates, intended to make it more democratic, did pass.[101] However, since the national congress had rather limited powers (as noted in section 5.2 above, it was the party council which considered manifestoes and candidate lists), this change can be regarded as a minor one.

Ironically, the party's organisational culture which Gardeniers saw as part of the problem seems to have limited the scope of the structural reforms proposed by the Klaassen commission. However, it cannot be denied that significant steps towards democratisation were made which followed the spirit of the evaluation report: the Klaassen commission revised its recommendations based on Gardeniers, and the national committee and party council followed by introducing OMOV elections for the party chairmanship and membership referenda on specific issues. In this way, the power of the membership was enhanced. It is also quite clear that these were made by the same logic as our propositions presuppose: that a strong membership, being rooted in society, helps to gain electoral support if it is given a greater degree of power in the party organisation. In this way, the 'people's party character' of the CDA presents solid evidence in favour of a connection between a strong attachment to a particular base and the reinforcement strategy.

97. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 32; 42.

98. CDA, National Committee, "Beknopt memo discussie in Partijbestuur over rapport Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig, 23 september 1994."

99. CDA, Klaassen Commission, "Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig," 26; CDA, National Committee, "Concept-Partijbestuursstandpunt Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig," 9-11.

100. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1997, art. 55a, accessed August 22, 2017, http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9485, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten, Huishoudelijk Reglement en Standaard Reglementen CDA," 1994, art. 66a, accessed August 22, 2017, http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9484, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

101. Proposal made in CDA, Klaassen Commission, "Herkenbaar en Slagvaardig," 25-26; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1997, art. 55a, accessed August 22, 2017, http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9485, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten, Huishoudelijk Reglement en Standaard Reglementen CDA," 1994, art. 66a, accessed August 22, 2017, http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9484, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University

5.4.1.2 Programmatic changes 1994-1998: the strength of ideology

The key variable in the model on programmatic changes is ideological attachment. As has been argued above, the CDA, even as an office-seeking party, maintained a strong ideological orientation. The Gardeniers report shows that this appraisal in the literature also prevailed within the party. By casting the "responsible society" as an ideological advantage enabling a middle way on the reform of the welfare state, the Commission shows how confident the party was of its ideological relevance.[102] The unifying importance of the ideology in the relatively young party should also not be underestimated. All this shows that the party had a high degree of ideological attachment that should lead to a focus on traditional issues and ideology rather than a broader profile in which these traditional values are downplayed.

Again, the recommendations of the Gardeniers report offer the first signs that the party did in fact reason in this way. This is a first sign that the party did approach the crisis from an institutional rather than a functional perspective as we have predicted, and provides evidence in favour of proposition 5c that strong ideological attachment inclines a party towards the reinforcement strategy. After all, as has been argued in 4.3. above, the decline of the party's traditional base, which it was also aware of, might have enticed the party to play down its traditional values. The diagnosis of the report was that the party's external image had "flattened out" due to the technocratic demands of office.[103] To remedy this, a renewed focus on the core tenets of the party ideology, united under the concept of "the responsible society", was prescribed, with a special focus on immaterial issues.[104]

The party acted on this recommendation by setting up a Policy Review (*Strategisch Beraad*, roughly translating as Strategic Council[105]) under the chairmanship of party grandee and former Minister of Finance Frans Andriessen. It was prompted by a resolution of the party council of November 1994, instructing the national committee to initiate such discussions "in short order" and offer proposals for decision-making at the 1995 Spring party council.[106] This resolution also called for analysis of the recent social developments to be guided by the Christian democratic ideology and the programme of principles and named a few issues it felt should feature.[107]

The Policy Review was set up and carried out under the auspices of the party's Research Institute. Although the minutes note that formally, the institute was charged with the

102. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 11-12.
103. Ibid., 39. Original text uses the term \{}textit{"vervlakking"}.
104. Ibid., 37.
105. The translation "Policy Review" has been preferred over a more literal translation to draw attention to the comparison with the Labour case (ch. 6).
106. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Resolutie m.b.t. plaatsbepaling" (1994), inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.
107. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Resolutie m.b.t. plaatsbepaling" (1994), inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

review by the national committee[108], other documents[109] noted that the initiative itself came from the institute and its director, Jos van Gennip. This sheds an interesting light on the agency of this actor. Much respected for their medium-term policy studies, the Research Institute does seem to have had an authority that might have added to the Review's influence.

The Review was seen as, essentially, a renewed application of the Programme of Principles, which would form its point of departure, to contemporary politics and society.[110] Furthermore, the Policy Review Group, consisting of people "with some distance to the daily policy formulation process"[111], was given a threefold task: to advise with regards to a repositioning of the party on "major social challenges" in the coming decades, to promote dialogue and discussion and to recruit new capacity and expertise for Christian democracy.[112] The Policy Review Group included many exponents of a younger generation of party thinkers, most prominently its influential secretary, Christian-social philosopher and future Prime Minister, Jan-Peter Balkenende.[113]

The title of the report provides an apt summary of its contents: "New Ways, Firm Values".[114] The "Strategic Choices" it made rarely shift the party's ideological foundations, but in fact return to the roots of the party's ideology as expressed in its Programme of Principles.[115] In terms of issues, themes of security and values prevail – it gives priority to immaterial issues as Gardeniers seems to have recommended.[116]

One might expect the party's ideological tradition to have led to a more Christian-social positioning. Indeed, the issues the party council asked for in the positioning resolution of

108. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-partijbestuur gehouden 20 januari 1995," Minutes of the National Committee, 21st of January 1995 (1995), inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, p. 6-7.

109. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-partijbestuur gehouden op 12 december 1994 in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," Minutes (*Resumé*) of the National Committee, 12th of December 1994 (1994), inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 2; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Het Strategisch Beraad," Memo on the Policy Review dated 19th January 1995 distributed at National Committee Meeting (1995), inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, p. 2.

110. F.H.J.J. Andriessen, "Aan het bestuur van de gemeentelijke afdelingen van het CDA," Letter to the Boards of the Municipal Associations, dated 5th of April 1995. (1995), WI/SBG/22.95/JPB/MJ, inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague; CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-partijbestuur gehouden op 12 december 1994 in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," 2.

111. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-partijbestuur gehouden op 12 december 1994 in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," 2, translation by the author of this dissertation.

112. CDA, National Committee, "Het Strategisch Beraad," 1.

113. Ibid., 2.

114. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Policy Review, *Nieuwe Wegen, Vaste Waarden*, Report of the Policy Review (The Hague: CDA, 1995), translation is the official party translation of the title. Accessed August 22, 2017, `https://d2vry01uvf8h31.cloudfront.net/Organisaties/Visiegroepen/Publicaties/Nieuwe_wegen_vaste_waarden_1995.pdf`.

115. CDA, National Committee, "Het Strategisch Beraad," 2.

116. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 37.

November 1994 seemed to call for this.[117] However, the Policy Review turned up something else. Voerman casts New Ways, Firm Values as a socially conservative document, introducing a strong focus on values and standards that was not there before.[118] Indeed, while the document seems strongly grounded in Christian democratic ideology, it does focus on issues that had not been part of the party's core appeal earlier or focuses on old issues in a new way.[119] These choices would later prove very important, a crucial part of the party's return to power.[120]

Although the minutes of the national committee also give fear that the discussion would be mired in procedures as a reason for ruling out amendments to the document itself,[121] the party decided upon a new and less conventional method for discussion of its contents in order to get a wide-ranging dicussion of the report beforehand in a 'bottom-up' manner, encouraging the district branches to take the lead in bundling reactions that would be used to formulate the resolutions that would be presented to the party council.[122] The report was well-received in the branches, judging by a summary of the responses to this consultation.[123] One would expect that the 1998 manifesto would therefore have made heavy reference to a report so well-received. The 1998 manifesto, however, follows very Christian-social "centre-left" lines, as Lodders, chairwoman of the manifesto committee, named community, family, healthcare and education as main priorities to the national committee, with values and security missing.[124] This might be due to the fact that it was agreed that the committee should have some room to deviate from the Review.[125] Later, the 2002 manifesto would be based heavily on the work of the Review.

117. CDA, Party Council, "Resolutie m.b.t. plaatsbepaling."

118. Voerman, "Inleiding," 18.

119. For example, security, in the Dutch context, has mostly been associated with the VVD rather than the CDA, and it figures as one of the main strategic choices of the Policy Review.

Reference is made to these 5 themes in Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur, gehouden op vrijdag 3 november 1995 bij het SBI te Doorn," Minutes of the National Committee 3rd of November 1995 (1995), PB/9552753V/ps, inventory nr. 1681, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 2

120. As also argued by Voerman, "Inleiding," 19.

121. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 19 januari 1996 gehouden bij het SBI te Doorn," Minutes of the National Committee, 19th of January 1996 (1996), PB/9652032V/ps, inventory nr. 2805, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 2.

122. J.J.M. Helgers, "Aan de Kamerkringvoorzitters, c.c. de secretarissen," Letter to the chairmen of the District Branches, dated 25th of October 1995 (1995), VZ/9500179/SvE, inventory nr. 1861, Christen-Democratisch AppÃšl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Besluitvormingsprocedure Strategisch Beraad" (1996), inventory nr. 2805, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

123. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Samenvattende Inventarisatie Notitie Strategisch Beraad: op basis van samenvattende reacties kamerkringen en reacties gelieerde organisaties," Summary of responses to the Policy Review (1996), inventory nr. 2805, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 4.

124. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het versterkt CDA-Partijbestuur gehouden op maandag 13 oktober in "De Poort van Cleef" te Utrecht," Minutes of the expanded National Committee Meeting, 13th of October 1997 (1997), inventory nr. 2816, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, p. 3-4.

125. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur, gehouden op vrijdag 16 februari 1996, in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," 4.

The programmatic changes follow quite directly from the analysis and the recommendations of the Gardeniers Commission. The high amount of confidence in the party's ideology and in particular in its focus on the 'responsible society', as well as the prescription to give more attention to immaterial issues, were taken to heart by the Policy Review. The report of the Policy Review does exactly this: it sheds light on the issues of the day, including rediscovered issues of security and values, while starting from an extensive reflection on the Christian democratic ideology and maintaining the typically Christian democratic focus on responsibility and society. In so doing, the Policy Review became the cornerstone of a programmatic reinforcement strategy: it highlighted the party's traditional values, rather than downplay them. In this way, the programmatic dimension of the CDA's recovery strategy shows a clear connection between ideological attachment and the reinforcement strategy: from the confidence in the party's ideology shown by Gardeniers, to a Policy Review which took this ideological heritage as a point of departure.

5.4.1.3 Tactical Changes, 1994-1998: the advent of marketing

With high electoral base attachment through both informal norms and personal ties as well as ideological attachment in evidence, one would expect that the tactical choices made by the CDA would be guided towards a reinforcement strategy as well and lead to a tactical focus on a narrower constituency. Indeed, this seemed to have been the early preference of the parliamentary party.[126] However, the evaluation commission's recommendations and, as we shall see, the party's actions, did not conform to expectations. Instead, the recommendations stressed a broader appeal by bringing in new organisations in civil society and strengthening the position of those of non-Christian faiths.[127]

In looking for an explanation for this surprising deviation from the overall pattern, two pieces of evidence suggesting lower electoral base attachment and a challenging external environment should be kept in mind. First, the party was avowedly catch-all, since its statutes committed it to appealing to the whole of Dutch society, and this could qualify the generally strong electoral base attachment. Related to this, the evidence of partisan dealignment contained in the Gardeniers Report suggest that the numerical importance of the base in the future would decline. Based on a functional strategy, this would mean some pressure towards an extension strategy to remedy the decline of the base. This interaction of external factors with internal factors could lead to elements of a broader-based strategy being introduced in the tactical dimension in particular.

A large role in these matters must be attributed to a number of bodies set up by the national committee with the intention, sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit, to help the party reach certain groups. The Intercultural Group (*Intercultureel Beraad*, ICB) was reformed from a committee into a special organisation to help integrate ethnic minorities into the CDA. The extension background of this initiative was not just clear, it was actually explicit: the memo of the National Executive proposing this ICB-new style explicitly referred to the clause of the programme of principles that states the CDA

126. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-partijbestuur gehouden op 12 december 1994 in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," 8.
127. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 29 & 39.

directs itself to the entire Dutch population and it referred to a 1991 resolution which sets the body a two-fold goal of promoting minority participation in the party and in politics in general.[128] A later memo on the body, however, made note of the tension between the party's Christian orientation and the position of minorities, a matter, as we shall see, which would be a recurring theme and which would mean a natural constraint on efforts to implement this particular Gardeniers recommendation.[129]

There were, however, also reinforcement elements. These largely concerned specific groups that had deserted the party in 1994 and contributed to a combination of measures appealing to core and non-core voters that is part of the extension strategy. The way the pension system had figured negatively in the party's image over the course of the 1994 campaign gave rise to a clearly tactical initiative: the wish, first expressed in 1994, for the formation of an old-age group or association.[130] The initiator of the eventual proposal, Van Egmond, explicitly mentioned the relation to electoral targetting[131], which is not surprising as the elderly were one of the major base groups deserting the party in 1994.[132] This *Seniorenberaad* was instituted by resolution of the party council in June 1996.[133] Measures were also undertaken to strengthen the party where it was structurally weak, in the cities, particularly the larger ones in the *Randstad*[134] conurbation.[135] To improve the position of the party in the big cities, a working group was created devoting its attention entirely to this topic.[136]

Under Helgers's chairmanship, the CDA moved to using marketing techniques based on lifestyle instead of demographics. In an analysis of (among others) the strategy of the CDA in 1998, Van Praag and Penseel make note of the use of lifestyle segments from the model of Amsterdam marketing firm Trendbox by the party.[137] They note that religious altruists (older religious voters) belong to the CDA's core electorate, and the profile given for "reserved social activity" (religious but less so than the altruists) also

128. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Executive, "Betreft: opzet ICB nieuwe stijl," Memo to the National Committee on the ICB-New Style (1994), PB/9453578/N/ps, inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 9-11.
129. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, ICB Steering Group, "Betreft: Startnotitie / Plan van Aanpak," Memo to the National Committee (1995), PL06/9454071c/N/ps, inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 1.
130. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 14 oktober 1994," 5.
131. CDA, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur van 13 mei 1996, gehouden in het Jaarbeurscongrescentrum te Utrecht," 5.
132. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16.
133. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 30 mei en 1 juni 1996," Papers of the Party Council, 30th May and 1st June 1996 (1996), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 14.
134. The Randstad is the Dutch term for the country's major conurbation, formed by the urbanized area between the cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht. It contains the four largest Dutch cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and the Hague.
135. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16 & 53.
136. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Betreft: Werkgroep Grote Steden," Memo on the Big Cities Working Group (1994), JK/05/12/1994, inventory nr. 1679, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.
137. P. Van Praag Jr. and S. Penseel, "Wat Wil de Kiezer? Politieke Marketing en de Verkiezingscampagne van 1998," in *Jaarboek 1998*, ed. G. Voerman (Groningen: Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen, 1999), 107.

implies that many of them were CDA core voters.[138] The other two categories - labelled "dependent security" and "civilized hedonism" and corresponding roughly speaking to the "average Dutchman" who watched RTL4 and more individualist voters - are mostly floating voters for whose vote the primary competitor is the VVD.[139] The analysis also makes note of a category of "more progressive young voters" ("caring postmaterialists", in the Trendbox terminology), who would have been attracted to the party on the basis of the manifesto but were not chosen as a target constituency. Crucially, they note that the "dependent security" segment of voters supported the CDA in large numbers during the Lubbers years.[140] Therefore, insofar as the short-term campaign plan is concerned, the CDA's strategy is accurately characterised as tending towards the reinforcement strategy. However, with more long-term projects in the cities and among minorities, there are significant elements of an extension strategy as well.

In response to the inability of the Parliamentary Party (which was not much rejuvenated in the 1994 election, as stated before) to achieve breakthroughs in opposition, Helgers and the executive came up with a very different candidate list for 1998: of the top 15 candidates, only the top candidate, new party leader Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, was an incumbent MP. This intention to bring in a new generation was an explicit part of the profile established for the new parliamentary party.[141] Although none of these candidates (save perhaps for Doctors Without Borders co-founder Jacques de Milliano) were new to the party, the sheer scope of the overhaul and its intent of bringing in a new generation are enough to qualify it as an increase in the number of "outsider candidates" and part of the extension strategy. It has to be noted, however, that many of the candidates were connected and identified with the new course set out in the Policy Review which, as already noted, did not move away overly much from the party line.

In an interesting way, the actions of the CDA on the tactical dimension between 1994 and 1998 show how these strategies are often trade-offs. Nevertheless, this particular combination of core and non-core voters leans on balance towards the extension strategy rather than the reinforcement strategy. It seems that where short-term campaign strategy was characterised as tending more towards reinforcing the base, several long-term projects such as the ICB and the big-cities group were justified with reference to the demographic decline of the base. These measures generally fall within the bounds of the extension strategy. However, it is interesting to note that there is an element in the process which does reflect some of the influence of high electoral base attachment towards a reinforcement strategy in the form of the resistance to broadening the base to non-Christian faiths with explicit reference to the 'C' of the CDA.

138. Van Praag Jr. and Penseel, "Wat Wil de Kiezer?," 107.
139. Ibid.
140. Ibid.
141. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Candidate Selection Committee (*Vertrouwenscommissie*), "Rapport van de CDA Vertrouwenscommissie Kandidaatstelling Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 1998," Report dated 15th of September 1997 (1997), inventory nr. 2984, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 6-8.

5.4.2 Sticking to the plan: 1998-2002

The 1998 election was without a doubt another crisis for the party. Despite its best efforts in opposition, the party not only failed to gain any seat in Parliament but actually lost a further five, bringing it to another record low of 29 seats. The party fell from second place and was displaced by the VVD. The polls, however, had the CDA more or less constantly around 30 seats up until the last campaign week.[142] The loss was therefore more or less anticipated. A report found that the party's loyal electoral base (good for around 23 seats) had held, and ascribed the loss of CDA-leaning voters to a premiership battle between the PvdA and the VVD.

Despite the devastating effect on morale, an evaluation working group chaired by former Central Office director Gert Groenendijk reported optimistically. The base had held, despite its long-term decline.[143] The party's profile was strengthened on important issues such as security. Despite an image problem, there was, according to the committee, an opportunity to compensate by gaining the allegiance of newer voters.[144] This must in part have been due to the good position among the youngest cohort of voters.[145]

Given the shock of losing seats while in opposition, one could have reasonable argued that the CDA might reverse course after 1998, adopting a clearer extension strategy after the previous reinforcement strategy had failed to work out. As we shall see, this is not in fact what happened. It bears keeping in mind that seat loss could have been more or less expected looking at the polls.[146] More importantly, the Groenendijk report states that certain recommendations of the Gardeniers report hadn't been completely implemented yet.[147] On that basis, it is less surprising that the party, rather than pivot towards extension, went even further on the path it had set out on in 1994.

5.4.2.1 Towards OMOV: Organisational changes, 1998-2002

In 1997, the CDA revised its statutes, incorporating some of the Klaassen recommendations (see 5.4.1.1.). Combined with the lacklustre results of the PPNS pilots, one might surmise that this was about as far as the CDA would go in terms of organisational reforms. However, six years later in 2003, the party revised its statutes yet another time, this time abolishing party council and national congress in favour of a single congress operating by OMOV.[148] Though the amendment is outside of our period of inquiry, its preparation is not.

As we have seen between 1994 and 1998, while the principle of internal democratisation was universally held on the national committee, the practice of full OMOV ran into political constraints. Attachment of actors, especially the regional branches, to the current

142. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Groenendijk Working Group, "Nieuwe Wegen in Aanleg" (1998), Copy supplied to the author by the Research Institute of the CDA, the Hague, 13-14.
143. Ibid., 18.
144. Ibid.
145. Ibid., 16.
146. Ibid., 13-14.
147. Ibid., 10.
148. The result of this revision can be found in Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement," 2003, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9486`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

setup of party organs and the accompanying power structures, seems to have played a key role here. The party council and national congress and their respective powers gave to each lower level its own way to get influence. This much was evidenced by the reluctance even to accept a change to the basis on which membership numbers transferred into delegate numbers.[149] On that basis, one would expect that the status quo after the 1999 revision would be held.

What caused the CDA to change its mind about OMOV? It could have been the disappointing results of the 1998 elections, but if that were the case *Nieuwe Wegen in Aanleg* would have recommended this course of action.[150] Another possible reason is external to the party, and should be mentioned because it presents the possibility that the party's hand was forced. In 1998, a lawsuit calling for the dissolution of the party was filed by a private citizen because the party allegedly violated association law provisions stating that the general assembly should be a single body.[151] In the case of the CDA, it was unclear whether the national congress or party council was this supreme body.[152] The response of the party reveals that there is no direct link with OMOV, however, since the same letter by the party's lawyer notes that the national executive then decided that this role should be played by the national congress, while the party council should become a 'political forum'. Merging the two, as in the later OMOV scenario, was not on the table.[153]

The debate on OMOV was reopened when the youth wing CDJA submitted a resolution on party structure to the November 1999 party council.[154] This resolution explicitly called for the consideration of a full OMOV system, strict separation between council and congress, multiple nominations as the rule and a new division of responsibilities between sub-national branches and national organs.[155] The text of the resolution, which was supported by the national executive at the party council, mentions the desirability of more influence for members.

In response to this adopted call for proposals to be presented at the 2000 spring party council, the national executive instituted a committee led by executive member Koos Janssen to report on these issues.[156] At the next party council and each subsequent meeting, the committee reported in a way that much resembled the intent of the original CDJA resolution.[157] The OMOV system was to be extended to the entire party, including council

149. As described in 4.1.2., this recommendation of the Klaassen Commission was not implemented.
150. In fact, *Nieuwe Wegen in Aanleg* did not make any recommendations as regards the structure of the party. Such was not even part of its rather technical terms of reference as reported on page 7 of the report.
151. R. Steenvoorde, "Betreft: Aanpassing statuten," Letter to the members of the Statutes Commission dated 8th of December 1998 (1998), inventory nr. 3084, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 1.
152. Ibid.
153. Ibid.
154. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Resolutie Partijstructuur ingediend door het CDJA" (1999), Digital Archives, CDA Central Office, the Hague.
155. Ibid.
156. M. Stolk, "Partij in Beweging; Partij in Ontwikkeling," Draft Discussion Paper on Party Development, dated 6th of December 1999 (1999), inventory nr. 2987, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 6.
157. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken," Papers of the Party Council, 13th

and congress.[158] In addition, multiple nominations would be made compulsory at least for the party chairmanship.[159] It seems likely that this radical course of action was made possible because of the support of the national executive; not least because running up to 2001, there were still notes of disquiet on the national committee about the extent of OMOV.[160] In other words: the same constraints we observed in 1994-1998 with OMOV were still present, but seem to have been circumvented by an alliance between the national executive and interested parties like the CDJA. In addition, Janssen defended his proposals to the national committee by pointing out that newer and younger members were overwhelmingly in favour of OMOV.[161] This justification by appealing to the preferences of new members implies that OMOV was considered important to stopping the decline of the membership.

The Janssen Committee's recommendations, in line with the CDJA resolution, appear in the 2003 Statutes revision.[162] OMOV was introduced in the new national congress of the party that replaced congress and council, although each provincial branch could send a number of delegates who would get an additional vote in addition to their vote as a member.[163] It is hard to infer causality here, but both the court case and the new OMOV system seems to have played a role in merging the two organs. In the internal regulations of the party (*Huishoudelijk Reglement*), there is an explicit requirement for multiple nominations for the party chairman and his deputies.[164] In this way, a discussion that had been ongoing for a long time was brought to a conclusion.

Interestingly, the CDA also experimented with a very limited form of external democratisation, which is conceptually part of the extension strategy. The national executive chose a new way of compiling a manifesto. Rather than the usual internal committee which would come up with a proposal to be amended and confirmed by the party council, there

of May 2000 (2000), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 89-92; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Spelregels Partijraad 4 november 2000" (2000), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 16-19; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken CDA-Partijraad en Congres 3 november," Papers of the Party Council and National Congress, 3rd of November 2001 (Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 2001), 17-26, The run of national committee minutes available at CDA Central Office reveals that Party Development was a monthly recurring item on the agenda.

158. CDA, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken CDA-Partijraad en Congres 3 november," 17-26.

159. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 17 februari 2001," Papers of the Party Council, 17th of February 2001 (Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 2001), 84-87.

160. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Verslag vergadering van het Partijbestuur van het CDA d.d. 31 augustus 2001 in Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee Meeting, 31st of August 2001 (2001), Anonymous Personal Archive consisting of National Committee Minutes, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 1.

161. Ibid., 2.

162. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement," 2003, art. 27 and 30. Accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9486`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

163. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement," 2003, art. 30. Accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9486`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

164. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement," 2003, art. 24 and 25 HR, accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9486`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

would be a "Competition of Ideas".[165] In this competition, members and non-members could submit ideas on ten major themes. The best ten of each issue area, as determined by groups of experts reporting to the program team, would then be put into the manifesto.[166] The 2002 manifesto marks each pledge inspired by such an idea with an asterisk, giving us insight in the extent to which the ideas influenced party policy: about 75% of the pledges, a substantial part, was influenced by the competition.[167]

It should be noted that there was no question of the Competition ever being enshrined in any rules. It was deliberately presented as an experiment with an innovative way of coming up with a new manifesto. The keyword here was "bottom-up". The involvement of non-members in this crucial policy formulation process was defended by stating that ideas from outsiders were considered worthwhile even if the sources of those ideas could or would not commit to membership.[168] It serves the logic of an extension strategy as we outlined it: the more people that are involved through external democratisation, the more people are potentially bound to the party.

Because the Competition was an experiment with empowering non-members, it also does not weigh up against the OMOV reforms which empowered the membership. This means that power, on balance, shifted towards the membership, resulting in a reinforcement strategy. This reinforcement strategy admittedly might not have taken the exact same form without the court case brought against the party. However, the fact that the party also entertained the possibility of a more limited change retaining the delegate-based system, but in the end chose to go with the OMOV-based new national congress in a similar vein as the first-cycle attempts at empowering the membership shows a continuing thread between the Gardeniers report and its analysis and the recovery strategy.

5.4.2.2 Programmatic changes, 1998-2002

In programmatic terms, the reinforcement strategy continued. Despite the 1998 defeat, there seems to have been a general consensus that the manifesto from that year was a solid Christian Democratic document. This was, among others, expressed in references to the manifesto alongside the Policy Review as a primary source of direction for the future.[169] The only problem the Groenendijk working group found was a mismatch between various

165. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst CDA-Partijbestuur van 22 september 2000," Conclusions of the National Committee Meeting, 22nd of September 2000 (2000), Anonymous Personal Archive consisting of National Committee Minutes, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 1-2.

166. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Betrokken Samenleving, Betrouwbare Overheid," 2002, 4, accessed November 3, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/424`; It should be noted that the original way the Competition was presented would have only six winners, independent of focus group. This is stated in CDA, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 17 februari 2001," 77.

167. CDA, "Betrokken Samenleving, Betrouwbare Overheid," 76 out of a total of 100 chapters marked with an asterisk.

168. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Party Council, "Vergaderstukken Partijraad 4 november 2000," Papers of the Party Council, 4th of November 2000 (2000), Collection of Party Documents, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 43.

169. Resolution submitted by the CDJA, found in CDA, Party Council, "Spelregels Partijraad 4 november 2000," 24; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst Partijbestuur van 2 juni 2000," Conclusions of the National Committee Meeting, 5th of June 2000 (2000), Anonymous Personal Archive consisting of National Committee Minutes, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 2.

documents on issues like security released in addition to the manifesto, which were seen as being external to it.[170] A major conclusion of the committee based on electoral research after the election was that the approach of 1994 through 1998 seemed to be working: in addition to being the owner of issues like family, agriculture and values, the party was fully in contention for healthcare and education and had made solid progress towards ownership of the VVD-held security issue.[171]

The consensus therefore seems to have been that the party was on the right track programmatically. Both in minutes of the national committee and in resolutions of the party council, the drafters of the party's newest manifesto were explicitly given both the Policy Review and the 1998 manifesto as their frame of reference.[172] Perhaps due to the Competition of Ideas and a deliberate choice on chairman Van Rij's part to push for businessman Hessels, a relative outsider, to head the process, however, the final product of the committee looked very different from its predecessor.[173] The 1998 manifesto had been regarded as a more social-Christian document – the 2002 manifesto's top 10 priorities include more conservative policies on law and order and immigration which were hitherto regarded as the territory of the VVD.[174] It is also telling that the issue areas named by the Groenendijk report as areas with potential for issue ownership – healthcare, education and security – contain prominent new initiatives.

A similar focus can be seen in various "themed years" geared towards claiming ownership of various issues during the 1998-2002 parliamentary session. 1999 was declared the Year of Security, with various programmatic efforts focusing on this topic.[175] 2000 became the Year of Generations, focusing on both the elderly and families, two core CDA segments.[176] Nevertheless, especially the Year of Security was not typical CDA programmatic territory (as has been noted above, law and order issues are largely regarded as VVD territory) and it can thus be regarded as a shift towards a broader political programme, part of the extension strategy.

In conclusion, the party remained on the reinforcement track. This is largely due to the continued optimism in CDA ranks about the strength of the party ideology. Combined with perhaps slightly more realism arrived at through electoral research, this makes for a strategy which hangs towards a focused programme playing on the party's electoral strengths – values and families – while attempting to gain ownership of a few highly topical issues such as security using the conclusions of the Policy Review.

170. CDA, Groenendijk Working Group, "Nieuwe Wegen in Aanleg," 21-22.
171. Ibid., 16-17.
172. Resolution submitted by the CDJA, found in CDA, Party Council, "Spelregels Partijraad 4 november 2000," 24; CDA, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst Partijbestuur van 2 juni 2000," 2.
173. M. L. J. Van Rij, *Duizend Dagen in de Landspolitiek: Leiderschapscrises in het CDA* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 2002), 105.
174. CDA, "Betrokken Samenleving, Betrouwbare Overheid."
175. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Jaarverslag CDA 1999," Annual report of the CDA, 2000, 22-23, accessed November 3, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/822`.
176. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Jaarverslag CDA 2000," Annual Report of the CDA, 2001, 28-29, accessed November 3, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/823`.

5.4.2.3 Tactical changes, 1998-2002

In the tactical area of the recovery process, there also seems to have been a continuation along the lines inspired by the Gardeniers report earlier. The Groenendijk report found that the 1998 general election had consolidated the party's core electorate, although that group was still declining.[177] This observation is significant in two ways. First of all, it notes the success of the defensive narrow-base reinforcement measures of 1994-1998, such as those among senior citizens. Secondly, it once again draws attention to the realities of partisan dealignment. Because the base had been more or less successfully defended, this leads to the expectation that dealignment will become a bigger factor and lead to a broader focus in tactics. This view was indeed taken as the basis for a presentation of campaign strategy by Communications Director Joep Mourits, which advocated focus on new groups of voters, especially younger CDA-leaning voters (*oproepbaren*).[178] This strategy was endorsed by the national committee.[179] A pocket campaign handbook for 2002 also notes that especially among non-religious voters and Roman Catholics, improvement of the party's fortunes was essential for a good result.[180] In addition, the CDA campaign focused more on the PvdA and the VVD than on smaller competitors, surmising that the main competition was with those parties.[181] It can be said, therefore, that the CDA was looking to recapture the support of non-core voters it had enjoyed under Lubbers.

A major initiative in terms of forming durable links with new segments of voters was a renewed pursuit of the Gardeniers report's recommendation to give a stronger position to those of non-Christian faiths. Acting on this idea, Van Rij initiated the formation of an arms-length Centre for Politics, Religion and Spirituality (*Centrum voor Politiek, Religie en Zingeving*, CPRZ). This provoked criticism, both in the broader party and on the national committee, that he wanted to do away with the party's Christian inspiration.[182] Saliently, though, the party chairman wrote in the party magazine that the CPRZ was "intended to form new coalitions in society".[183] The centre functioned for the entire period of Van Rij's chairmanship, and was successful in drawing in minority figures such as the Dutch-Surinamese Kathleen Ferrier, who would become the 'outsider' Deputy Chairperson of the manifesto drafting team.[184] It did not, however, durably lead to a visible shift in focus of the party's main tactical strategy towards minorities.

Meanwhile, Van Rij, himself a relative outsider (he had not been a member of the national committee before ascending to the chairmanship) came to office with a spirit of

177. CDA, Groenendijk Working Group, "Nieuwe Wegen in Aanleg," 18.
178. J. Mourits, "Waar liggen de groeikansen van het CDA," Sheets for a Powerpoint Presentation dated 7th of April 2000 (2000), inventory nr. 3001, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.
179. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst Partijbestuur 7 april 2000," Conclusions of the National Committee Meeting, 7th of April 2000 (2000), Anonymous Personal Archive consisting of National Committee Minutes, CDA Central Office, the Hague.
180. CDA, "Campagnewijzer Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2002," 4.
181. Ibid., 5.
182. CDA, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst van het Partijbestuur van het CDA d.d. 17 november 2000," 4.
183. M. L. J. Van Rij, "CDA in het politieke landschap: CDA moet zich ontwikkelen tot pluriforme, multiculturele partij," *CD/Actueel*, August 14, 1999, 4–5.
184. Van Rij, *Duizend Dagen in de Landspolitiek*, 105.

renewal in mind. Fraanje and de Vries and Van Rij himself note the range of appointments of outsiders in the party bureaucracy and key functions in the organisation.[185] This continued in the traditionally 'in-house' appointment of the chairman of the manifesto committee: rather than appoint a party grandee as usual, the national committee appointed two outsiders to the chairmanship and deputy chairmanship of the committee, businessman Hessels and the aforementioned Kathleen Ferrier.[186] The wish for the chairman to have a business background was even in the profile drafted for the vacancy.[187]

There are various versions of the precise agendas involved, but the fact of the matter remains that De Hoop Scheffer grew to distrust party chairman Van Rij, leading to the two being increasingly at odds towards the end of the second electoral cycle. Various memos on the leadership and the course of the party from the chairman and his allies were interpreted by the party leader as an assault on his position.[188] The exact personal interests involved need not be treated extensively in this chapter.[189] The fact remains, however, that by the end of the clash over the leadership this distrust escalated into, both Van Rij and De Hoop Scheffer resigned from their functions, leaving a sort of vacuum that was filled as by "Planned Coincidence"[190] by the young Finance spokesman, the later Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende. Balkenende had been deeply involved with the programmatic renewal efforts as secretary of the Policy Review and was named by the campaign plan as "the personification of the (...) rich ideas and certain values".[191] As such, this particular personal change can be seen mostly as a final choice of leader who had been deeply involved with the strategy in programme, and more generally with the new course of the party. So argued, it complements the reinforcement components of the strategy apparent in the Policy Review.

On balance, the decisions taken on targeting and the diversity of the party elite seem to continue the trend of the 1994-1998 period in containing both reinforcement and extension elements. The targeting focus on both Catholics (reinforcement) and non-religious voters (extension) in the short term had shifted slightly to extension, perhaps because of the success in reinforcing ties with the base earlier. The more important long-term measures enabled by long-term contingency, particularly the CPRZ were all geared towards extension. It has to be noted, however, that the same resistance to extending the base to non-Christian religious voters that was apparent in the response to the Gardeniers report also surfaced here and to some extent hampered the execution of the plan. However, on balance the strategy still focused in its long-run intent on broadening the base and

185. R. Fraanje and J. de Vries, *Gepland Toeval: hoe Balkenende in het CDA aan de macht kwam* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010), 26; Van Rij, *Duizend Dagen in de Landspolitiek*, 105.

186. CDA, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst CDA-Partijbestuur van 22 september 2000," 2.

187. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Profielschets voor de voorzitter van het ProgramTeam" (2000), MS/20/09/00, inventory nr. 3001, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague.

188. Van Rij, *Duizend Dagen in de Landspolitiek*, 99-100; Fraanje and Vries, *Gepland Toeval*, 40.

189. For example, it was rumoured that Van Rij had ambitions to become party leader himself. Van Rij has always denied this, and in an interview with the author paints the picture that by the end, he had created a power vacuum from which a new leader simply had to (and did) emerge. M.L.J. Van Rij, Interview with the author, The Hague, 12th of June, 2014; see also Van Rij, *Duizend Dagen in de Landspolitiek*

190. Fraanje and Vries, *Gepland Toeval*.

191. CDA, "Campagnewijzer Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2002," 5.

projecting a more inclusive image, continuing the tactical extension strategy.

5.5 Conclusion: True colours

Although the party pursued a reinforcement strategy on balance during both cycles as expected, table 5.2 paints a puzzlingly mixed picture of the CDA's recovery strategy nevertheless. Although the organisational and programmatic dimensions show clear reinforcement strategies, with at most minor extending measures being taken on the organisational dimension, the tactical dimension turns up a strategy that leans more towards broadening the party's base than focusing on its core voters. Interestingly, this means that while the party reaffirmed its traditional values and empowered its large membership, where its targeting was concerned it focused more on those outside of its base of core voters. How come? A clue might be found in the information available to the party at the time. After all, the well-received and influential Gardeniers report made note both of the party's confidence in its membership and its ideology and of its vulnerability in the face of partisan dealignment.

This works in two ways. On the one hand, the reinforcing elements of the party's strategy seem clearly related to this high degree of electoral base attachment and ideological attachment, and this impression is further strengthened precisely because the party was also aware of its vulnerability. In the face of that particular piece of information, one might expect that the party would also downplay its traditional values and move power away from the membership to allow more leeway to appeal to a broader constituency. The fact that this did not happen is clearly related to the party's high ideological attachment and electoral base attachment. In the discussion of the Policy Review and the organisational reforms considered above, the confidence in the strength of Christian Democracy and in the membership from the Gardeniers report onwards clearly figure into the narrative for these changes and show a party confidently putting its faith in the strengths it believed it had.[192]

In particular, the resonance of the Gardeniers self-analysis throughout the process lends credence to these findings. There were two components to this analysis: the strength and relevance, according to members, of the ideology itself (the Christian Democratic vision on man and society) and the vitality of the membership organisation (related to the people's party character). Both lead, with a single exception, to a uniform pressure towards the reinforcement strategy on the organisational and tactical dimension: if one believes in the continuing strength of its core ideological tenets, strong social roots and vital membership, then of course one will tend towards going back to those strong foundations. This seems to be what happened in both the Policy Review and the major moves towards OMOV, although the latter naturally runs into institutional interests resulting in a reluctance to embrace it. This reluctance was only overcome when the CDJA resolution on party structure forced a breakthrough.

On the other hand, the party's existing membership did not help it much in the face of its own decline and particularly against the decline of its core vote that Gardeniers

192. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 11-12.

Table 5.2: Overview of the CDA recovery strategy, 1994-2002

Cycle	**Organisational**	**Programmatic**	**Tactical**	**Overall**
First cycle, 1994-1998	Internal democratisation (*reinforcement*) • OMOV elections for party chairmanship (*reinforcement*) • PPNS pilots including membership diversification (*minor extension*) • Reform of national congress (*minor reinforcement*)	Highlight traditional values (*reinforcement*) • Policy Review *Nieuwe Wegen, Vaste Waarden* (*reinforcement*)	Broader targeting (*extension*) • Intercultural Group (*extension*) • Seniorenberaad (*reinforcement*) • Big Cities Group (*extension*) • Increase in number of newcomers on the list (*extension*)	Reinforcement
Second cycle, 1998-2002	Internal democratisation (*reinforcement*) • Full OMOV in national congress (*reinforcement*) • Competition of Ideas (*minor extension*)	Highlight traditional values (*reinforcement*) • Policy Review as manifesto frame of reference (*reinforcement*) • Themed years on Security and Generations (*reinforcement*)	Broader targeting (*extension*) • Campaign plan targets younger voters as well as Catholics (*mixed*) • Centre for Politics, Religion and Spirituality (*extension*) • Outsiders in key functions (*extension*) • Balkenende becomes leader (*reinforcement*)	Reinforcement

observed.[193] This might explain the apparent paradox that a party so attached to its electoral base and its ideology would still pursue a strategy on the tactical dimension that mostly seeks to broaden its appeal. This has been visible since the Gardeniers report, which also recommended measures to extend the appeal of the party to non-Christian groups. This could, on the one hand, be argued to emerge from the people's party character of the party – "the party, without distinction, appeals to the whole of Dutch society".[194] On the other, however, there seems to have been more than a little resistance towards broadening the party to non-Christian faith groups for fear of the Christian inspiration of the party being lost. This attachment to the party's Christian ideological roots apparently prevailed over this commitment in the party statutes, as most of the measures to extend to non-Christians fell flat in the face of it. However, this does not explain why the party also took measures to broaden its core vote based on other factors than religion, such as the Big Cities Group.

What tipped the scales in favour of broadening the electoral base and kept the party leadership invested in their attempts to broaden their appeal was probably the reality of partisan dealignment itself. This occurred especially towards the end of the 1994-2002 period and is most visible in campaign strategy documents between 1998 and 2002. Although the documents do not directly link the two, the known decline of the party's core vote as recounted in the Gardeniers report and the renewed appeal to groups outside this core vote do coincide, suggesting a possible link between the two. Among the different facets of the recovery strategy, electoral tactics proved to be most susceptible to external pressures. We also see this same pattern emerging in a more limited way on the organisational dimension with the experiments with forms of external democratisation and membership diversification such as the PPNS pilots and the Competition of Ideas, introducing an extending element into an organisational strategy mostly based on empowering the membership.

When we compare both electoral cycles studied in this chapter and look at the impact of the second defeat, what stands out is that even if the party seemed deeply demoralised, there was a large amount of continuity. The election defeat did not lead the CDA to conclude that its current course must be wrong. In fact, the 1998 evaluation report explicitly sees the new defeat in the light of the as-of-yet incomplete implementation of the Gardeniers report.[195] Although the strength of the Gardeniers Report as a kick-off for the renewal agenda and the low expectations within the party for 1998 must be seen as a factor, we should also entertain the influence of the electoral system here. Further down the line, the argument of the lost election does not explicitly figure as a motivation to redouble the efforts towards implementing Gardeniers. This suggests that these were being pursued on their own merits and would have been increased even in the event of a moderate gain. This suggests, in turn, that at least in the CDA case, the question of the influence of PR can be settled by concluding that PR, at least in this case, has no effect

193. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16.
194. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, "Statuten en Reglementen CDA," 1985, art. 3. Accessed August 22, 2017, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9483`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
195. CDA, Groenendijk Working Group, "Nieuwe Wegen in Aanleg."

on the choice of recovery strategy.

When its goals come under pressure, the first question the party has to deal with is what the party actually is. In the case of the CDA, the broad but principled Christian democratic people's party led to a reinforcement strategy. This image goes back to the time of its formation, and was undoubtedly reinforced in the pressure cooker of the party's early years. This is not surprising, given the prevalent idea in the literature on party change that parties are inherently conservative and resistant to change.

6 The Labour Party, 1983-1992

6.1 Introduction

If there exists a paradigmatic case of electoral crisis leading to dramatic changes in a party's outlook, it is almost certainly the British Labour Party's reinvention as New Labour. After going through a period of great internal strife in the 70s and a major split leading to the creation of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in 1981, Labour suffered one of the most humiliating defeats for an official opposition party in Britain: in the 1983 election, they lost a quarter of their votes, almost a fifth of their seats and barely scraped for second place in the popular vote.[1] The form Labour took after going through this difficult period was perhaps the first iteration of the Third Way on the European left.

One might almost forget that it was not as easy as that. Before 1983, Labour was a party with a deep socialist and trade unionist identity, under the increasing programmatic control of those favouring its ideological purity. The transition into New Labour was tumultuous and incremental, and not, as it turns out, all due to the internal motivations of the party itself. In fact, the internal institutional characteristics of the Labour Party would be a sure recipe for a reinforcement strategy, in which the party would go back to its roots and its traditional values to rediscover its strength. This is exactly the opposite of the ultimate outcome of the process.

The analysis of Labour in this chapter shows the clearest of all evidence to be found for the proposition concerning the effects of the electoral system, particularly First Past the Post (FPTP), on the recovery strategy. In concrete terms: the structure of the FPTP system can be expected to constrain Labour to a more extending trajectory than one would expect based on its internal characteristics. Taken together, the full thrust of the expectations generated by the model in this case would be for initial preferences to show a marked reinforcement strategy, before the effects of the electoral system give more rational and functional reasons to pursue a reinforcement strategy.

This chapter analyses the process of transformation the Labour Party underwent between 1983 through 1992 based on minutes from the party archives and the personal archives of Neil Kinnock, along the lines of our model, identifying two different phases: an initial phase from 1983 until the 1987 general election and from the 1987 general election onwards. Before doing so, section 6.2 will present a general overview of the Labour Party and its organisation, and measure up the party according to the independent variables of the model. After a short introduction on the 1983 General Election which gave the electoral shock in section 6.3, section 6.4 will then present a dimension-by-dimension

1. H. Döring and P. Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)," Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, `http://www.parlgov.org`.

descriptive analysis of the recovery strategy as it developed. Finally, section 6.5 presents the conclusion of the analysis.

6.2 The Labour Party in 1983: setting the stage

In the course of the 20th century, the Labour Party has emerged as the major centre-left force in British politics. Founded in 1900 as the Labour Representation Committee, the Party originated as a conglomerate of organisations (mostly trade unions) pooling together into a single organisation to sponsor left-wing Parliamentary candidates. The party introduced individual membership in 1918. It entered government for the first time in 1924 under Ramsay MacDonald with a very small minority of the seats in Parliament; over the course of the interbellum, Labour would rise to supplant the Liberals as the major opposition to the right-wing Conservative Party. It won its first majority government in the landslide of 1945 under Clement Attlee, forming a government that would among others be responsible for the foundation of the National Health Service (NHS).

Over the course of its history, the bond with the trade unions remained a strong part of the party's identity. It was characterised during the period between 1945 and the 1970s as a rather moderate party upholding the "post-war consensus", a somewhat corporatist position shared by both the Labour and Conservative Parties. In his influential *Parliamentary Socialism*, left-wing thinker Ralph Miliband argued that Labour's history was 'dogmatic', but about parliamentarism rather than socialism.[2] They were strongly committed to the parliamentary system and 'flexible about all else'. Indeed, Labour's political leaders were more moderate. The rise of the left in the party in the 1970s led to ever stronger factional conflict.

The link with the wider Labour movement (as the trade union movement is usually referred to within party circles) has left a strong imprint on the party organisation. Webb notes that British parties largely concentrate power at the centre, particularly around their parliamentary parties, and place little in the way of demands on their members.[3] The Labour Party was no different in this regard. Where it was different from the Conservative, Liberal and Social Democratic Parties, this was largely the result of its historic role as political wing of the trade union movement. Organisationally, the party had three wings: in addition to the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) and the extra-parliamentary organisation represented nationally by the National Executive Committee (NEC) and locally by the Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs), the party's affiliates, dominated by the trade unions, comprised the party. To understand the Labour Party and the events of 1983-1992, it is crucial to have an understanding of the dynamics between the three.

Like in all British parties, the parliamentary party was a dominant force and had wide-ranging autonomy.[4] Its leadership was also the leadership of the party-at-large and of the

2. R. Miliband, *Parliamentary Socialism: A Study in the Politics of Labour* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972 [1961]), 13.

3. P. D. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain: the Iron Law of Centralization?," in *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*, ed. R. S. Katz and P. Mair (London: SAGE, 1994), 109.

4. Ibid.

Labour movement as a whole. The PLP had dominated both leadership selection and the process of policy-making, especially surrounding the authoring of manifestos. Unlike their Conservative counterparts, however, the PLP's authority was not unrivalled. This was because of Labour's setup as a mass organisation. The Labour Party Constitution governed the way in which the entire party conducted its work, and was under the authority of the Annual Party Conference, thus limiting the autonomy of the PLP compared to the Tories and Liberals.[5]

This is particularly relevant when considered in light of the way the balance of power had shifted by 1983. By that time, the PLP's influence had become the victim of factional strife between the left and right of the party. Historically regarded as a bastion of the pragmatic right of the party, the PLP and its leadership were accused by left-wing activists of repeatedly betraying the policies passed by conference and included in the party's general election manifestoes. This eventually grew into what could be called the "betrayal theory", which equated leadership with betrayal.[6] Over the course of the 70s, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) was set up by the left, and successfully pushed to curtail the autonomy of the PLP. Two reforms in particular were important. First of all, while the PLP had at first elected its own leader, in 1981 this was placed in the hands of an electoral college representing CLPs and affiliates as well as the members of the PLP.[7] Secondly, the left had successfully pushed for mandatory reselection as candidates of incumbent MPs, which meant local activists could more easily replace MPs whom they thought had "betrayed" the manifesto.[8] Regardless of these reforms, however, the leader of the party remained a central figure to its organisation, and his elected frontbench team of spokespersons known in opposition as the Parliamentary Committee or the Shadow Cabinet[9] was a driving force for policy still.

The other major actor in the party was the 29-member NEC. The unions were represented on this body by a twelve-man strong contingent, much smaller than the seven allotted to the CLPs, five specifically to women and two (leader and deputy leader) to the PLP (although some MPs served as representatives of other sections).[10] These members were elected by the relevant sections of party conference. The official role of the NEC was to develop policy between conferences and direct the work of national headquarters.[11] The chairman of the NEC was traditionally chosen based on seniority, and did not have a large role in the party organisation's day-to-day direction. That role was played by the general

5. The Liberals had a Constitution, of course, but the Liberal Parliamentary Party was only named as supplying members for certain bodies, and the appointment of its officers left autonomous. In the Labour Party, this was different.

6. E. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979: Crisis and Transformation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 165; see also the quote by Mitchell on page 20.

7. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain," 119; D. Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987" (PhD diss., Queen Mary College, University of London, 2004), 21-22.

8. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 16-17; Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987," 19.

9. In the text, preference shall be given to the colloquial term "Shadow Cabinet" rather than the official term "Parliamentary Committee", in the interests of clarity.

10. P. D. Webb, "The United Kingdom," in *Party Organizations: A Data Handbook*, ed. R. S. Katz and P. Mair (London: SAGE, 1992), 855.

11. Ibid.

secretary of the party, the head of Labour Party Headquarters, an important figure that attended the NEC without a vote. The NEC conducted its work largely through a number of committees, including the influential Home Policy Committee and the Organisational Committee.

This leaves the role of the unions. In practice, the unions used their dominant position in the party with a considerable degree of self-restraint.[12] Unions were regarded as being on the "traditional right" of the party.[13] According to Minkin, trade union leaders recognised that asserting too much influence would be damaging to the party, and therefore exercised restraint, leaving leadership in political affairs to the PLP.[14] Successive bodies were formed to give union support to Labour election campaigns.

As can be inferred from the way certain bodies were perceived as on the left or right, the factional balance plays a particularly important role. Each faction generally had its own group of MPs and extra-parliamentary groups. The right of the party had historically been dominant, with the support of the trade unions. Its ideology was "labourism" more than socialism, being concerned more with furthering the labour movement's interests than with ideological concerns of socialism. They also dominated the PLP before 1981 organised in the Manifesto Group, but their power was diminished when defectors from the right left the party and established the SDP. Their organisations were the St. Ermins Group of trade union leaders, the Labour Solidarity Campaign and Forward Labour.[15] By 1983, an important development was taking place in this factional balance as the left was splitting. The leadership challenge of the left's standard-bearer, Tony Benn, to the sitting Deputy Leader, right-winger Denis Healey, is often seen as a pivotal moment. Several left-wingers, including the party's 1983-1992 leader, Neil Kinnock, abstained from the ballot in protest, leading Benn and his allies to leave the left-wing Tribune Group of MPs and form the 'hard-left' Socialist Campaign Group.[16] The remaining members of the Tribune Group are usually seen as the 'soft left'. This soft left is very important to our narrative, not just because Kinnock was a member of this faction, but also because this split in the left opened up opportunities to ally with the old right and trade unions to restore electoral viability.

The Labour Party is a large party, both in terms of votes, seats and members. Especially in the latter regard, if the affiliated members through the trade unions are taken into account, it dwarfed all other British parties with a total of just over 6,5 million in 1982.[17] However, Webb also notes that these trade union members were largely passive.[18] The individual members were considerably fewer in number at 273,803, and much smaller as a body than the reported 1,2-million membership of the rival Conservative Party in 1982, but still way larger than the minor Liberal Party with its 100,000 members in 1985, the

12. See L. Minkin, *The Contentious Alliance: Trade Unions and the Labour Party* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991).
13. Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987," 10.
14. Minkin, *The Contentious Alliance*, 28; 30.
15. Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987," 8.
16. Ibid., 25-26.
17. Webb, "The United Kingdom," 847.
18. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain," 110.

closest year these statistics are available for.[19] As a result, Labour has a significant amount of resources.[20]

It should be kept in mind that the factional conflict within the Labour Party strongly colours the discussions on electoral base attachment and ideological attachment. Labour's tradition was, for most of the 20th century, defined by the dominant position of the right, which was less ideological and more socialised in the parliamentary and trade union environment. Essentially, the right adhered to a revisionist social democracy.[21] However, the rise of the left, which was more committed to socialism as an ideology and differed in its ideas about the working class, changed all this in the rather short timeframe between the foundation of CLPD in 1973 and the implementation of the electoral college in 1981.[22] This will be expanded upon further in the analysis below, which serves to measure up the party according to the independent variables of the model.

6.2.1 Electoral base attachment

The party's strong links to the trade union movement and its wide array of affiliate organisations make the party a strong example of a party with high electoral base attachment through formal ties. In the common discourse, Labour has essentially been seen as the party of the unionised working class and the political arm of the trade union movement in particular. Webb notes that the trade unions affiliated to the party effectively "became" its organisation.[23] Within the party, this trade union connection is usually regarded as a valuable part of the Labour identity; to the outside world, especially during the 80s, experience with general strikes in the preceding decade had occasionally seen this bond portrayed as pernicious or damaging to society-at-large.[24] Nevertheless, the formal links to the trade unions and the informal norms that put value on these links combine to make the party strongly attached to its base through these formal and informal links.

This is in part due to the party's origins as the Labour Representation Committee through which the unions sought political representation, and in part due to the class-based nature of British politics. Although Webb describes Labour as a mass-integration party, he also distinguishes this from a mass-membership party and notes that essentially "coalitions of parliamentary *and union* elites" dominated it.[25] It was also grounded in working-class culture.[26] The working-class self-image of the Labour Party, in terms of our model is informal electoral base attachment: the working class, perhaps more even than socialism itself (hence the term Labourism), was the core identity of the party and its *raison d'être*.

More importantly, however, the identity of the party as the political arm of the broader Labour movement found expression in its institutions and therefore in the broader dy-

19. Webb, "The United Kingdom," 847.
20. Although Webb remarks that most British parties do not place a lot of demands on their members.
21. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 2.
22. Ibid., 8.
23. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain," 110.
24. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 46.
25. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain," 110, italics added.
26. L. Black, "'What kind of people are you?' Labour, the people and the 'new political history'," in *Interpreting the Labour Party: Approaches to Labour Politics and History* (2003), 31.

namics of power within the party. The party did not just have individual members, but also a huge block of affiliates who were members through their trade unions. These affiliates were largely passive payers of an automatic 'political levy' through which the trade unions supported the party.[27] The number of individual members, who joined through their local Constituency Labour Party (CLP), was considerably smaller. This meant the levy dwarfed Labour's income from membership fees, giving the unions a strong position.

This strong position was also expressed in the party's governing bodies. The party's Annual Conference or national congress consisted of one delegate per 5000 members, be they affiliated through their union or CLP, which gave the unions a huge 'block vote' to cast on behalf of their largely passive membership.[28] Likewise, the unions were guaranteed 12 seats on the 28-man National Executive Committee (NEC) for their representatives.[29] This tied the party strongly to its trade union roots both through the purse strings and through power relationships. It should be noted that the unions were reticent when it came to exercising this power, as has already been noted above.

Even if the Labour Party was strongly attached to its working-class and trade union base through its formal organisation, it should be noted that like all major parties, it was confronted with the effects of partisan dealignment. Webb notes that both its individual and affiliate membership were declining, and that there was also a decline in the patterns of class voting.[30] Documents in the personal archives of Neil Kinnock show that the party was aware of this.[31] However, the party remained formally attached to the trade unions, and this influence required them to at least take the views of their unionised base into account. This attachment to the electoral base of the party should engender a reinforcement strategy, particularly in the field of electoral tactics and organisation: the party's history as a working-class movement should make it more difficult to veer away from this particular path.

6.2.2 Ideological Attachment

As noted above, Labour's identity was defined more by its working-class base than its ideology, which was commonly described within the party as "democratic socialism".[32] The word "commonly" should be emphasised here, for the party had no declaration of its founding principles which contained the official version of this ideology. What official references there were to ideology were contained within the party constitution, specifically in the infamous Clause IV which described its aims. The original version of this clause contains a commitment to eventual full-scale nationalisation of the means of production.[33]

27. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain," 114.
28. Webb, "The United Kingdom," 857.
29. Ibid., 855.
30. Webb, "Party Organizational Change in Britain," 114-115.
31. G. Marshall et al., "The Decline of Class Politics?" (1985), KNNK 2/1/67, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2-3.
32. For instance in the title of N. Kinnock and R. Hattersley, "Democratic Socialist Aims and Values" (1988), Papers on the Policy Review, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.
33. D. Wring, "The media and intra-party democracy: 'New' Labour and the clause four debate in Britain," *British Elections & Parties Review* 7, no. 1 (1997): 50.

The words were considered symbolic and appeared on the party's membership cards.[34] Nevertheless, Clause IV has been divisive throughout the party's history, showing much of Labour's conflictedness when it came to its ideology. This was a factional conflict. The right of the party had a more practical bend, while the left was more ideologically motivated.[35] This came to the fore in various battles between left and right, such as the 1960s attempt by rightist leader Hugh Gaitskell to abolish Clause IV because of its electoral drawbacks. Davis notes that the party's socialist ideals such as Clause IV had at most been paid lip service, and subordinated to the need to achieve the emancipation of the working class through Parliament.[36]

It was the right wing, with its "Labourism", rather than socialism, driving the party for most of its existence.[37] According to Cronin, Labourism rested on cooperation between trade unions and government to keep wages low, coupled with Keynesian economic strategies to spur growth.[38] For much of its existence, therefore, the party was very pragmatic, willing to sacrifice its expressed socialist principles to secure government and the ability to make parliamentary progress. This was made possible by the passive position adopted by the trade unions and the membership. Its history is not one of strong ideological attachment.

Nevertheless, by 1983, this had changed. The movement known as the "New Left" within the Labour Party had changed the dynamics within the party. More activist party members felt betrayed by the parliamentary leadership and openly denounced the pragmatism with which the party conducted itself in government as a casual disregard for the party's electoral manifestoes. The strength of the left was already evident as early as the 1960 party conference, when the party briefly embraced unilateral nuclear disarmament until party leader Hugh Gaitskell's Campaign for Democratic Socialism succeeded in overturning it, and in the successful resistance to Gaitskell's attempt to scrap Clause IV at the same conference.[39] Unilateral nuclear disarmament and Euroscepticism would be major bones of contention between the factions.[40] These charges of betrayal against the elected leadership of the party led to the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) in 1973: unless the MPs were brought to heel by mandatory reselection as a candidate, an electoral college for the leadership and NEC control over the manifesto, they would keep betraying the leadership, according to the left.[41]

Due to a loss of control of the union leaders over their members, the activists were able to mobilise successfully. Between 1979 and 1981, both mandatory reselection and

34. Ibid.

35. M. Davis, "'Labourism' and the New Left," in *Interpreting the Labour Party: Approaches to Labour Politics and History*, ed. J. Callaghan, S. Fielding, and S. Ludlam (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 45.

36. Ibid.

37. see Davis, "'Labourism' and the New Left"; J.E. Cronin, *New Labour's Pasts: the Labour Party and its Discontents* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2004), 7-8.

38. Cronin, *New Labour's Pasts*, 7-8.

39. Davis, "'Labourism' and the New Left," 41 & 45; Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987," 6.

40. Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987," 6.

41. Ibid., 15.

the Electoral College were achieved.[42] This put pressure on MPs to tread more carefully around their CLPs. The left also managed to secure crucial seats on the NEC from year to year, and left-winger Michael Foot was elected by a PLP under pressure from their constituency parties to lead the party in 1979.[43] This flexing of muscles by the left, combined with the exodus of major right-wingers who defected to form the Social Democratic Party in 1981, turned Labour's ideological character around. Since the left, which was far more ideologically attached than the right, occupied such a position of power, Labour has to be regarded as strongly ideologically attached, even if less so than a party in which ideological attachment had a longer history of ideology. This should make it costlier to pursue an extension strategy, particularly in the field of programme, since the dynamics of influence in the party would resist such changes. Altogether, Labour should therefore be expected to pursue a reinforcement strategy.

6.2.3 External environment: electoral and party system

The British political system is notoriously majoritarian – in fact, the Westminster system is seen as the archetype of the majoritarian system. British elections to Parliament are effectively elections for a governing party, since a single party typically controls a majority of the seats in the House of Commons. Between 1945 and 1983, there has been only a single election that returned a so-called "hung parliament" in which no single party had an overall majority, in February 1974.

This is because the elections are conducted using a First Past the Post (FPTP) system with single-member electoral districts. In chapter three, we have already argued, following Rohrschneider, that a majoritarian electoral system like FPTP will make it harder for core voters to defect, as well as giving parties incentives to chase after unaligned voters.[44] In practice, the electoral system results in a large number of safe seats for both major parties – as Golosov has noted, very large parties are generally advantaged by the system, and the system also benefits those with territorially concentrated support.[45] Safe Labour seats are historically concentrated in urban areas, mostly in the industrial heartlands of the North of England, whereas Conservative safe seats are more rural, located largely in the Home Counties in the South. The election is effectively decided in a number of marginal constituencies where the two parties are closely matched, given that these seats determine the majority in Parliament. As a result, the British electoral system is quite disproportional, with a Rose index of proportionality of just 76.35[46] for the 1983 General Election.[47]

42. Hayter, "The Fightback of the Traditional Right in the Labour Party 1979-1987," 21-22.
43. Ibid., 21.
44. R. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing: how do parties target voters in election campaigns?," *Electoral Studies* 21, no. 3 (2002): 378.
45. G. V. Golosov, "Party nationalization and the translation of votes into seats under single-member plurality electoral rules," *Party Politics* 24, no. 2 (2018): 126.
46. Calculated by the author based on data from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."
47. The Rose index is calculated by subtracting the sum of the differences between each party's voteshare and seatshare at a given election, divided by two, from 100. See R. Rose, ed., *International Encyclopedia of Elections* (Washington: CQ Press, 2000)

Table 6.1: Overview of the Independent Variables: the Labour Party in 1983

Internal factors	**Measurement**	**Expected Strategy**
Electoral base attachment	Strong	Reinforcement
Ideological attachment	Strong[49]	Reinforcement
External environment		
Electoral system	First Past the Post	Extension
Previous election	Below average (-4%)	Reinforcement

This has resulted in a party system that is effectively a two-party system, where only two parties stand any chance of entering into government: the Conservative Party and the Labour Party. However, by 1983, a serious challenge had developed to this mode of competition in the form of the Alliance between the centrist Liberal Party and the breakaway Social Democratic Party formed by four rebel Labour MPs, which polled unprecedentedly high numbers in the popular vote for a third party in British history at 25.4% in the 1983 general election compared to Labour's 27.6%.[48]

The characteristics of the British electoral system are such that if the goal is to win more seats (and through them, a majority government), appealing to those that have voted for the party in the past is less useful. After all, these supporters largely live in safe seats that Labour already holds, and increasing the majority of the votes there therefore has no effect towards securing a majority. Therefore, there should be increasing pressure towards an extension strategy as the crisis continues, since this the electoral logic should push the party in this direction. In addition, the evidence already noted above of the decline of the party's working-class base should also lead Labour towards an extension strategy to compensate for this decline. According to the operationalisation of the impact of external factors developed in chapter four, this should primarily be in evidence in the second electoral cycle between 1987 and 1992, especially since the 1987 general election ended in another defeat for the party.

6.2.4 Overview and expectations

As shown in table 6.1, Labour's internal characteristics at the time of the 1983 general election point into a single direction. Through its history and its formal links to the trade union movement, Labour remained strongly attached to its working-class base. In addition, however, the dominance of the left and the concern for socialist ideological purity which it had managed to push to the forefront through the CLPD, strengthened the attachment of key actors in the party to socialist ideology. Because of this, we can expect a uniform influence towards a reinforcement strategy during the first electoral cycle. However, the dynamics of the FPTP electoral system constrain this option: an

48. See I. Crewe and A. King, *SDP: the Birth, Life and Death of the Social Democratic Party* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

49. Albeit with less of a tradition and more due to the increased influence of the left in the party, who can definitely be said to have such an attachment more than the party's traditional rightist leaders.

appeal to Labour's core voters, concentrated as they are in safe seats, will only have a limited effect if the party is to win back power. Therefore, a second cycle can be expected to show a change of strategy from the reinforcement to the extension strategy. For propositions 3 through 6 to find support in the data, therefore, the party should start off with a reinforcement strategy and then change to an extension strategy in the second cycle.

6.3 The 1983 General Election defeat

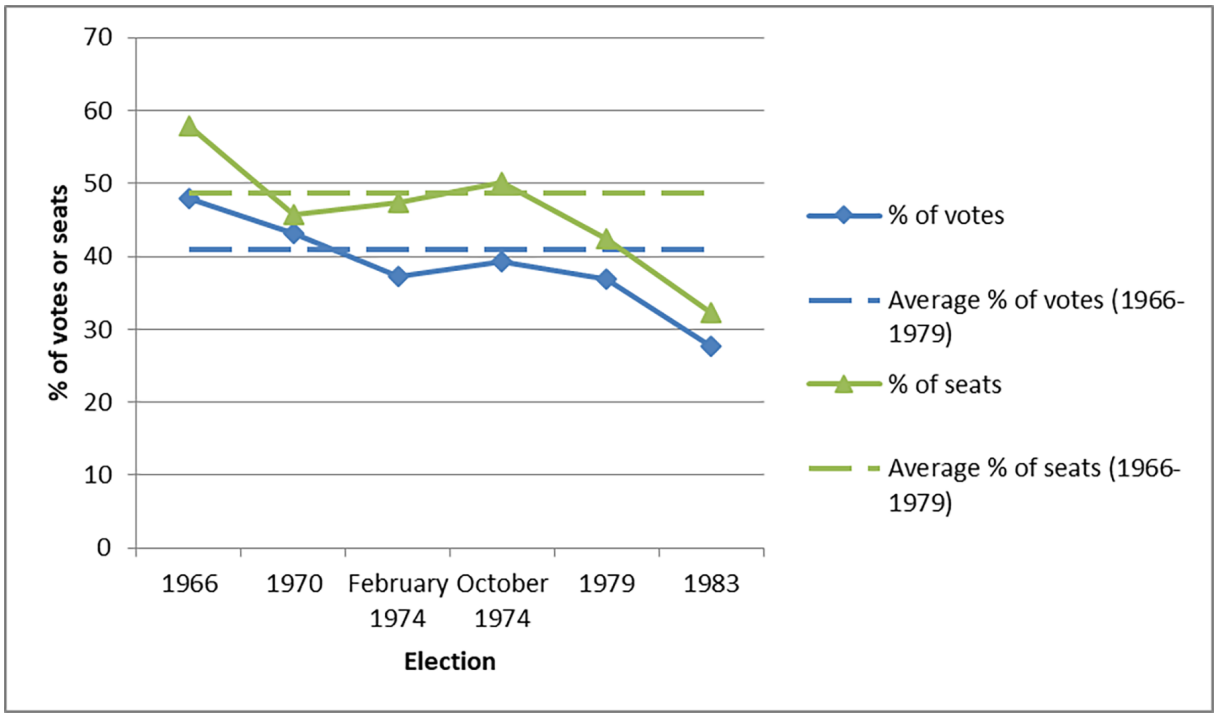
The 1983 General Election defeat saw Labour suffer the worst defeat in its history. Despite being in opposition against a generally unpopular government, the party managed to lose 52 of its 261 seats, about one-fifth, and after losing almost 10% of its share of the popular vote (a quarter of what it had polled in 1979) was uncomfortably close to the Alliance in the battle for second place.[50] This is below the 33% of votes or seats lost which we have set as a rule of thumb to recognise a crisis in a quantitative way. However, there are solid qualitative reasons to consider the case despite this. The official opposition can usually expect to gain seats at a general election. However, in 1983, this expectation of at least gaining on the Conservative government was not met in the slightest, leading to a feeling of crisis on all sides of the party, expressed differently: the hard left loudly complained that the Alliance and the press had stolen the election from them, whereas the right blamed the defeat on the left.

The fact that the previous election had already been a defeat for Labour also plays a role when we consider the identity of the defectors. In 1979, Labour was already below its average performance over the last five elections by 4%, as can be seen in the chart in figure 6.1.[51] The shock of 1983 brought it down to 13,3% below this average. This means that most of the defectors would have been core voters judging by our operationalisation. Though there might be some non-core voters involved, the threat to the core vote was significant. This would mean that the functional strategy for Labour to pursue would be a reinforcement strategy. As we shall see later in the discussion of tactical change, there is evidence supporting the picture that the Thatcherite Conservative Party was presenting a challenge to groups which traditionally voted Labour.

Perhaps thanks to the most graphical description of it by right-wing Labour MP Gerald Kaufman as "the longest suicide note in history"[52], the 1983 election defeat is associated in the popular mind with the Labour Party manifesto.[53] The manifesto was pushed through based on all the resolutions of a party conference dominated by the left of the party.[54] This led to a manifesto seen by many on the right of the party as unwieldy, contradictory and out-of-touch with the concerns of ordinary voters, without emphasis. It is generally also presumed that the manifesto's inclusion of many unpopular policies contributed to

50. Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."
51. Based on data from ibid.
52. "Editorial comment: a loser's manifesto," *Financial Times*, May 17, 1983,
53. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 41.
54. Ibid., 24.

Figure 6.1: Electoral performance of the Labour Party, 1966-1983



the defeat.[55]

In addition, secondary literature implies that the party's attitude to communication was outmoded. While the Conservatives conducted a slick, professionalised campaign using the services of PR agency Saatchi and Saatchi, which had also seen them to victory in 1979, the Labour left had a deep mistrust of using the techniques of modern marketing in political campaigns, considering them too corporate and capitalist.[56] This might also have contributed to the defeat.

6.4 The recovery strategy

The 1983 landslide defeat threw the Labour Party into disarray. However, it seems that the dominant interpretation of the defeat, expressed by many on the left, was that its political direction and policies were not to blame. Outgoing party leader, Michael Foot, emphasised that he thought the manifesto was not the problem and that he was convinced the party's stances would be vindicated.[57] The general attitude on the left seems to have been that the voters might not perhaps have appreciated Labour's principled positions during the general election but that they would in time be able to be educated to come round to the party's point of view. This was underscored by statements like "nuclear disarmament policy should not be decided by a public opinion poll" (attributed to the

55. Ibid., 27.
56. Ibid., 53.
57. M. Foot, "Manifesto Will Prove Right," *Labour Weekly*, July 17, 1983, Accessed at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

General Secretary, Jim Mortimer, in *Labour Weekly*)[58] in defence of the policy on unilateral nuclear disarmament, which indicated that although the party's leadership on the left was aware that its policy was out-of-sync with ordinary voters, it did not believe that this should result in changing it.

By contrast, critics of the leadership, mostly on the right of the party, were very quick to point out the flaws in the party's policies and presentation. Gwyneth Dunwoody MP, who would later become a prominent leader on the right, wrote to the General Secretary that "... the entire presentational attitude to these policies could not have been better designed to alienate the very people whose votes we needed"[59] and the General Secretary wrote in *Labour Weekly* shortly after the election that the defeat was political rather than organisational, and owed to a number of "own goals".[60] It appears that this assessment was also shared to some extent at Labour Party Headquarters, because Policy Director Geoff Bish wrote of the failure to prepare a manifesto that "accurately reflected the concerns and needs of ordinary voters" as one of the failings, also mentioning presentational and organisational feelings.[61]

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the mood on the left of the party, the National Executive Committee's evaluation of the 1983 general election, which was put before the 1983 Party Conference as the statement *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain*, reveals that it was unwilling to lay the blame squarely at the feet of the party's policies.[62] The tone of the NEC statement as regards policy seemed to be that a majority agreed with the party, but that the SDP split had alienated them from the party.[63] The campaigning priorities outline fairly traditional areas of party policy as the focus of party efforts, and most of the changes announced dealt with organisation and party unity.[64] It seems therefore that even the magnitude of the defeat was almost unable to convince part of the party elite (though not its new parliamentary leadership) that the crisis could not be ignored.

However hesitantly, the party had resolved to act on the crisis and perhaps moreso than the NEC, the incoming party leadership under Kinnock and Hattersley had resolved to tackle the party's problems in a decisive manner. Between 1983 and 1992, when Kinnock left office, and even moreso between 1983 and 1997, when Blair won a majority, Labour would be transformed into an altogether more centrist governing alternative, adopting some of the characteristics of its Conservative rival. In terms of the dominant power coalition, this has gone hand-in-hand with the reassertion of power by the parliamentary leadership of the party through the sidelining of the Party Conference in policy-making

58. H. Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim," *Labour Weekly*, July 17, 1983, Accessed at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

59. G. Dunwoody, "Letter to James Mortimer, General Secretary, the Labour Party" (1983), page stamped 000702, National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

60. Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim."

61. G. Bish, "The 1983 Election Campaign: the Failures: and Some Lessons" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 1.

62. Labour Party, National Executive Committee, "Campaigning for a Fairer Britain" (1983), KNNK 2/4/3, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; J. Mortimer, "General Secretary's Interim Report" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

63. Labour, NEC, "Campaigning for a Fairer Britain," 6.

64. Ibid., 7-14.

and the employment of a more professional organisation in the Leader's Office.

There is a very clear dividing line to be drawn between the first electoral cycle of Kinnock's leadership from 1983 to 1987, in which the outlook was more traditional, and the later period from 1987 to 1992, in which some of the contours of what would later become New Labour were becoming visible. Due to the decision to restrict analysis to two electoral cycles following the shock, this chapter does not go beyond 1992 in the analysis. This is not as problematic as it might seem - after a fashion, Blair's New Labour emerged as a consequence of the foundations laid under Kinnock's leadership.[65] We shall return to this argument in the conclusion. In the sections that follow, we shall occasionally discuss New Labour – but always from the perspective of how Kinnock's actions presaged and enabled the later formation of New Labour and its essential characteristics.

6.4.1 First hesitant steps: 1983-1987

The 1983-1987 period of Labour's recovery process is characterised by a rather traditional reinforcement strategy. Internally, the period seems to have marked a shift in the balance of power within the party from the hard left of the party to a coalition of the soft left and the trade unions, led by the party leader, Neil Kinnock. This was marked by the development of a more compliant attitude by the NEC towards the 1987 general election as elections to the NEC saw members more sympathetic to the party leadership returned.[66]

It was also evidenced by the party leader's struggle with the Militant Tendency. This Trotskyist faction, often accused of entryism, had built several power bases inside the party and the country. The group clashed with the party leader's new mission to make the party electable, offering a radical left-wing alternative and promoting civil disobedience. The group had been proscribed in 1982 but still retained sympathy in significant parts of the party. A turning point in the battle against Militant for Kinnock was marked by a widely-acclaimed speech to the 1985 Party Conference in which he turned on the "far-fetched resolutions" of the Labour left, referring to Militant-influenced Liverpool Council's disobedience to new local government budget restriction, which saw the council infamously hire taxis to "... scuttle round the city, handing out redundancy notices to its own workers", in Kinnock's words.[67] Following the speech, sympathy for Militant took a heavy hit, and in 1986, the Liverpool Council's deputy leader was expelled from the party.

Nevertheless, as we shall see, the NEC and the leadership did hold considerably different outlooks (and the hard left, still influential, held yet another). The NEC can be characterised as cautious. With a significant left-wing contingent and wary of the CLPs which would react against too radical changes, the NEC primarily focused on organisational reform at the Walworth Road Party Headquarters. Even there, it was noted by

65. Although this could be seen to be by no means both a necessary and sufficient condition. After all, John Smith's leadership between 1992 and 1994 was a more traditional continuation of Kinnock's course (for example, Smith's leadership saw the implementation of OMOV). Smith died in office, but his more limited reforms might very well have won the 1997 general election Blair's reforms went much further than Smith or Kinnock would ever have considered, but in a way they continue the more individualist cast which Neil Kinnock's programmatic reforms had given to Labour politics.

66. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 37; 159.

67. Quoted in ibid., 36.

his team member Patricia Hewitt that Kinnock had to take the lead to avoid different vested interests on the NEC bogging down the reforms.[68] It outlined a fairly traditional campaigning agenda, stemming from its evaluation of the defeat in *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain* as a function of presentation and party unity.

It should be noted that Kinnock's origins in the soft left probably did not put him that far from the old party line on many issues. His leadership campaign recommended that "unilateralism [in nuclear disarmament] must be held to unequivocally"[69]. However, he seemed aware of the fact that the party needed to appeal to a broader constituency, especially "those of the working class who have made at least some progress" and that "Thatcherism co-opts themes like liberty or patriotism that should be ours".[70] The documents in his personal papers show the agenda of the Leader's Office to be one more radical than the course that emerged, especially in organisational matters. Therefore, while it remains unlikely for Kinnock to have held the kind of programmatic views he would later push as party policy, we can at least say that he was of a mind to tackle further-going organisational and tactical changes.

6.4.1.1 Organisational changes, 1983-1987

According to the terms of the model, its strong attachment to its working-class base should lead to Labour adopting internal democratisation measures to empower the members, who are largely in tune with this core constituency's values. However, the concrete circumstances in the Labour case pose a challenge to this understanding of internal democratisation that needs to be cleared up first, since the largest part of the working-class base was passively affiliated rather than an active individual member of the party. The active members of the Labour Party in the 1980s, who held much of their power through the CLPs, are portrayed by Shaw as more radical and not afraid to pick fights with the leadership, causing a "crisis of legitimacy".[71]

Internal democratisation has an interesting effect in that it distributes power more widely, offering the possibility of a voice to the passive member. Since the affiliate members trump the voting power of the CLPs, the effect of introducing One Member, One Vote (OMOV) reforms in selections and the way in which the unions were treated was crucial in changing the balance of power in the party. Even if it only empowered individual members of the party and not affiliates, this can still be argued to be part of the reinforcement strategy. Bearing in mind the domination of left-wing CLPs because of their active and involved membership, empowering the more passive members of the party by means of OMOV shifts power away from these activists to members who are potentially more in touch with the concerns of Labour's core electorate.

This logic is evidenced by the attitude of the prime proponents of this reform. The

68. P. Hewitt, "Some Thoughts on Party Reorganization" (1984), KNNK 2/1/25, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

69. Labour Party, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 3.

70. Labour, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes," 2; P. Hain, "Memo on leadership strategy" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 11.

71. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 19-20.

leadership was favourable to OMOV because they believed it would stimulate membership involvement and further democratisation. This is exactly the logic of the model: through membership involvement, the party gets closer to its core supporters.[72] They pointed towards favourable experience with CLPs balloting their members in the 1983 leadership election.[73]

Of course, there is also something to be said for a power-based explanation of the push for OMOV. Since the parliamentary leadership now had the sword of Damocles of being refused reselection by left-wing CLPs hanging over its head, it was undoubtedly in their interest to circumvent radical activists within the party by broadening the franchise for these votes to less activist members. This was the motivation ascribed to the reforms by the CLPD and similar opponents on the left.[74] They claimed the move was caused by resentment over the introduction of mandatory reselection and that the primary motivation was to protect disloyal MPs from the scrutiny of their CLP, something Kinnock always vehemently denied.[75]

The battle for OMOV that started in the 1983-1987 electoral cycle was, therefore, a complicated affair. Kinnock's senior advisors, his chief of staff Charles Clarke and press secretary Patricia Hewitt cautioned against the resistance any move towards a mandatory OMOV arrangement for all CLPs would face, which made it a battle Kinnock was sure to lose.[76] While the leadership would have preferred a mandatory system, therefore, a voluntary system empowering CLPs to choose whether or not to use OMOV was devised.[77] When Conference rejected this compromise solution, it started a rather confusing back-and-forth between the NEC and Conference in which Conference defeats the proposal one year and then asks for new proposals to the same effect the next from the NEC, which failed to introduce them by 1986 (ahead of the 1987 general election) as planned.

The issue of trade union involvement played an important role in the discussions over OMOV. One of the principal criticisms of OMOV was that in the pure form in which only individual members would be entitled to vote, it would shut out the trade union movement of which Labour considered itself the political arm.[78] A group set up in response

72. C. Clarke, "Reselection - Issues and Possibilities" (n.d.), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; N. Kinnock, "Letter from Neil Kinnock to MPs opposed to Franchise Extension" (1984), KNNK 2/1/56, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2-3.

73. Labour Party, Leader's Office, "A Note on Re-Selection" (1984), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 1; Kinnock, "Letter from Neil Kinnock to MPs opposed to Franchise Extension," 2-3.

74. Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, "One Member, One Vote: Realities behind the slogan" (1984), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

75. Kinnock, "Letter from Neil Kinnock to MPs opposed to Franchise Extension," 3.

76. Clarke, "Reselection - Issues and Possibilities," 1; P. Hewitt, "Reselection: One Member One Vote: Encouraging Good Practice, Without Rule Change" (1984), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

77. Clarke, "Reselection - Issues and Possibilities"; Hewitt, "Reselection: One Member One Vote"; Labour, Leader's Office, "A Note on Re-Selection."

78. This concern was alive and well within parts of the trade union movement, as evidenced for example by a transcript of a speech Kinnock gave to the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR). Found in National Union of Railwaymen, "Extract from the speech of the Rt. Hon. Neil Kinnock MP on Tuesday, 30th June, 1987 at Dundee (Transcript of sound recording)" (1987), KNNK 2/1/56, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2

to the 1985 resolution asking the NEC for proposals recommended a decision for either of two mandatory systems for parliamentary selection: pure OMOV and a compromise Local Electoral College (LEC) in which votes were split between individual members and the block votes of affiliated trade union branches.[79] This latter system was adopted by conference in 1988.

The factional impact of the possible OMOV reforms was undeniable, and quite probably formed part of the leadership's motivation for the reforms. However, as expected from the theoretical framework of this study, it should be noted that there are strong themes of the party's working-class identity at play here. Looking forward to the reforms of the second electoral cycle, where this comes even more clearly to the fore, the question of what effect this would have on the party-union relationship looms large and lends support to the idea that while OMOV might have had a factional element, the eventual form of the system that was adopted, the Local Electoral College, also shows the hallmarks of Labour's attachment to the trade union base. In this way, Labour's high electoral base attachment can be said to have contributed to an outcome in which the membership of the party was empowered by organisational reforms.

6.4.1.2 Programmatic changes 1983-1987

The historical influence of socialist ideology in the Labour Party might be in dispute in the literature, but with the socialist left firmly in control of the party in 1983, their influence generated what one might call ideological attachment. Important veto-players in the party, such as the NEC and Conference, held strongly to traditional values in areas of policy such as nuclear disarmament[80] and employment, regardless of electoral consequences. The General Secretary of the Party, among others, insisted that changing policy for electoral reasons was not a discussion.[81] Even the incoming leadership insisted that the policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament must be held "unequivocally".[82] In such an atmosphere, a continued and even renewed focus on these traditional issues is to be expected.

In the NEC statement *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain*, the NEC did indeed focus the party's programmatic efforts on a number of traditional issues.[83] The statement to conference named a number of issues that undoubtedly can be seen as part of Labour's core programmatic efforts: the National Health Service, the welfare state and industrial relations.[84] There appears to have been the possibility of some influence of opinion research on the programmatic focus of the party: a Campaign Strategy Committee (CSC)

79. Labour Party, Franchise Review Group (Working Party on the Franchise), "Party Franchise for the Selection and Reselection of Parliamentary Candidates" (1987), Franchise Review Group Papers, Personal Papers of Dianne Hayter, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

80. Although unilateral nuclear disarmament was a policy that was only introduced to the party in 1960, the fanaticism with which the left pursued it and the influence of that particular wing within the party ensure that it was regarded at that time as one of the party's core issues. Much like the power of the left made the party more attached to ideology than it was at its foundation, unilateral nuclear disarmament can therefore be seen as having become a traditional issue by 1983.

81. Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim."

82. Labour, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes," 3.

83. Labour, NEC, "Campaigning for a Fairer Britain."

84. Ibid., 10-13.

document notes the issues as those on which the party was most trusted.[85] However, such electoral concerns apparently did not trump ideological influence. When the Shadow Communications Agency (SCA, see 6.4.1.3.) found that the issue of unemployment was not likely to sway any votes except those of voters who were unemployed themselves, this changed nothing about the general focus the party placed on the issue of jobs.[86]

Despite the realisation of the Leader's Office that "Thatcherism co-opts themes (...) that should be ours"[87], therefore, the party clearly elected to pursue an appeal highlighting their traditional values, contributing to a reinforcement strategy. This seems related to the party's ideological attachment in multiple ways. First of all, the prevailing opinion as evidenced in *Labour Weekly* seemed to favour holding fast to traditional stances on issues like unilateral nuclear disarmament.[88] Secondly, it should be noted that in the wake of the crisis, there was a need for party unity which might have forced the party to focus on policies that it generally was not divided upon. Finally, there is the perspective that Kinnock did not choose his battles.[89] Being engaged in a fight with the hard left and the entryist Militant Tendency, even if he had wished to he could not have afforded to move away from the party's traditional platform for the time being. In this way, the influence of the left, which is the principal reason for Labour's high ideological attachment in 1983, seems to be an important reason for Labour's programmatic reinforcement strategy.

6.4.1.3 Tactical Changes, 1983-1987: from red flag to red rose

Theoretically, the tactical dimension is of great interest to the model in the Labour case. Its strong attachment to its electoral base should incline it to playing to its traditional working-class constituency as predicted by the model. On the other hand, this base was evidently in demographic decline, and the party's leadership was aware of this. This latter circumstance would naturally require broadening the party's constituency, a pressure strengthened by the FPTP system. These contradictory expectations are important, since in contrast to the avowedly reinforcement-oriented other parts of the strategy in the 1983-1987 period, movement on the tactical dimension seems to decidedly favour a more inclusive image and therefore a broader constituency.

In explaining this deviation from the overall pattern, it is important to understand that the leader and his team carried greater influence in tactical decision-making. Shaw chronicles how prior to 1983, the Labour Party, particularly the left, had been distrustful of commercial campaigning and neglected public relations and campaigning.[90] Indeed, a note found in the archives sees a pollster explain to his colleague that Labour "does not understand what research can do for them until they've seen it in action".[91] The election

85. Labour Party, Campaign Strategy Committee, "Campaigning Strategy" (1983), CSC 4/14/11/83, KNNK 2/1/29, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 5.

86. Labour Party, Shadow Communications Agency, "Report on a Communications Strategy" (KNNK 2/1/72, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge).

87. Labour, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes."

88. Foot, "Manifesto Will Prove Right"; Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim."

89. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 30.

90. Ibid., 52.

91. C. Fisher, "Letter to Alistair Buchan" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

post-mortem produced by policy director Geoff Bish corroborated this by making note of a failure by the party to use its advertising agency appropriately.[92]

This changed in 1983. As a result of the evaluation, the NEC proclaimed communications a new priority, and a number of measures were taken that greatly empowered the leader and his confidants.[93] First of all, a Campaign Strategy Committee (CSC) was set up under the chairmanship of the leader with a wide-ranging coordinating role, strengthening his authority in the area.[94] In conjunction, a Campaigns and Communications directorate was created at Labour HQ, which came under the directorship of Kinnock's appointee Peter Mandelson and worked closely with the Leader's Office.[95] Finally, 1986 saw the creation of the SCA, a network of volunteer professionals to help the party prepare itself for the general election, which would prove very influential.[96]

All three innovations in campaigning structure served to empower Kinnock and his office, and this explains the deviation from the overall pattern that is the extension strategy on the tactical dimension. Internal documents from the Leader's Office are crystal clear about what voters Labour should be aiming for. In 1983, before being elected to the leadership, memos received by Kinnock make mention of an extension of Labour's alliance with the traditional working class and industrial trade unions to those sections of the working class "who have achieved material, educational or social progress".[97] Interestingly, the same paper decries the idea of a "conglomerate of minority groups", often described as a rainbow coalition, including for example the gay rights movement, such as had been employed in Greater London, as a "dangerous and diversionary strategy".[98] Research conducted by the party on attitudes on young voters and women additionally gave alarming intelligence regarding the ideological influence of Thatcherism on both groups and the extensive image problems Labour suffered from.[99]

The most visible aspect of the change in communications outlook was the new "red rose" logo adopted by the party which was worked out through the SCA. Corporate designs need not be significantly related to an attempt to change the party's appeal and image – they may just have been attempts to look fresh and modern. However, the red rose logo which replaced the red flag in the 1983-1987 period appears to be a deliberate attempt to evoke more moderate continental social democracy rather than the previous democratic socialism. Primary sources confirm this: a summary of findings for research on the logo convey very clearly that the designers and communications experts behind this were acting on instructions to go out of their way to avoid extremist and Militant connotations,

92. Bish, "The 1983 Election Campaign," 10.
93. Labour, NEC, "Campaigning for a Fairer Britain," 7.
94. Labour Party, Campaign Strategy Committee, "Terms of Reference" (1983), KNNK 2/1/29, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2.
95. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 56.
96. Labour Party, Shadow Communications Agency, "Terms of Reference" (1984), KNNK 2/1/72, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.
97. Hain, "Memo on leadership strategy," 11.
98. Ibid., 12.
99. Labour Party, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters" (1985), KNNK 2/1/71, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; Labour Party, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters" (', 1985), KNNK 2/1/71, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

suggesting that a more moderate and inclusive image evoking "caring, compassion and nationality" was the goal.[100]

By the 1987 general election, Labour had become much more publicity-conscious and more consciously appealed to the floating vote. In fact, this letter from polling firm MORI to Chris Powell, who headed the advertising agency for the campaign, note that this 20% of voters who are floating should be the "primary target voters".[101] Earlier, in 1985, this focus on the floating vote was already in evidence as social scientist Roger Jowell, in a presentation, noted that Labour had moved from a sectional to a broader-based appeal and that this was "absolutely correct".[102]

Despite the overall attention devoted to the extension of the franchise in candidate selection, less attention appears to have been afforded to attempts to change the overall composition of Labour's contingent of MPs and project a more inclusive image in this way. While the Franchise Review Report includes the mandatory shortlisting of a woman candidate in all its versions of the selection procedure, this appears to have come at the last moment.[103] Most likely, the efforts to reform candidate selection were focused on the franchise at the expense of looking for ways to increase Labour's number of women MPs. This would be in accordance with the reading of the period in the literature,[104] which recounts how efforts to increase the participation of women only picked up in earnest after 1987.

The leadership, empowered by the organisational reforms and in the knowledge that the base was declining, therefore, consciously pursued a broader-based constituency. All this should, however, be taken with a significant caveat: although Labour clearly sought to win over these floating voters, and did specific research into the attitudes of women and young voters, it was not yet ready to act on warnings coming out of this research that Thatcherism and its main theme of aspiration and ambition had a more intuitive appeal to these groups than the party had assumed.[105] One of the significant findings of this research was that the issue of unemployment had very little appeal to the individual voter unless he himself was unemployed; nevertheless, Labour continued to campaign on the issue.[106]

It seems to be the case, therefore, that style was ahead of substance in the Labour Party. The revision of the party logo was explicitly intended to soften and broaden its image. Though this shows that the party was reshaping its electoral strategy towards a broader constituency, this was not mirrored in substantial changes to the party programme yet.

100. Labour Party, Shadow Communications Agency, "Corporate Design/Slogan Research: Summary of Findings" (), KNNK 2/1/72, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.
101. R.M. Worcester, "Letter to Chris Powell" (1986), KNNK 2/1/72, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.
102. R. Jowell, "Summary of Roger Jowell Presentation January 16th 1986" (1986), KNNK 2/1/72, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.
103. Labour, Franchise Review Group, "Party Franchise for the Selection and Reselection of Parliamentary Candidates."
104. E.g. S. Perrigo, "Women and Change in the Labour Party, 1979-1995," *Parliamentary Affairs* 49, no. 1 (1996): 116–129.
105. Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters"; Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters."
106. Labour, SCA, "Report on a Communications Strategy."

Nevertheless, as a category, the 1983-1987 tactical strategy prefigured the much more sweeping changes the party would pursue from 1987 onwards, which would tackle these problems head-on. A possible explanation would be that the tactical dimension might be influenced by external demands earlier than the other dimensions.

6.4.2 Blatant Electoralism, 1987-1992

After Labour failed to win much ground in the 1987 election, its strategy shifted. This was most apparent in the area of programmatic change, which was previously confined to renewing the party's appeal on its traditional issues. In a 1987 PLP meeting, Kinnock pleaded guilty to "electoralism", and indeed, this seems an apt description of the general thrust of Labour's recovery strategy between 1987 and 1992.[107] Kinnock himself seems to have shifted in his attitudes towards the party's policy programme. For example, he now regarded unilateral nuclear disarmament as having been a liability in the 1987 election campaign rather than a policy that should be held to unequivocally.[108]

The balance of power within the party now seems definitely to have shifted in the direction of more radical changes, most likely because the 1987 result proved the party could not win without them. The Shadow Cabinet, though divided on the scope of the changes, was swinging in favour of changing Labour's programme.[109] The NEC seems to have come onside, as well. In fact, the NEC played a great role, as we shall see, in allowing the leadership to bypass conference in its efforts to overhaul the party's policy programme based on the conclusions of working groups of the PLP and NEC.

In an internal preliminary report, the weak position in London and the South was also underscored.[110] In addition, Labour was preferred on most issues but lost on its defence policy.[111] The NEC publicly responded to the "bitter disappointment" of the defeat in its statement to conference, *Moving Ahead*.[112] The tone was very different from *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain* four years back. Where the 1983 document had blamed the defeat on presentation and party unity, *Moving Ahead* contained an extensive analysis of social

107. N. Kinnock, "Neil Kinnock Address to PLP" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 7; Labour Party, Parliamentary Labour Party, "Minutes of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 4th November 1987 at 11.30 AM in Committee Room 14" (1987), Parliamentary Labour Party Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 1.

108. Labour Party, Parliamentary Committee, "Minutes of a Parliamentary Committee Meeting Held on 1 July 1987 at 6.00 pm in the Parliamentary Committee Room" (1987), Parliamentary Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 2; Labour Party, Parliamentary Committee, "Minutes of a Parliamentary Committee Meeting Held on 15 June 1988 in the Parliamentary Committee Room" (1988), Parliamentary Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 2; Labour Party, Parliamentary Committee, "Minutes of a Parliamentary Committee Meeting Held On 17 May 1989 in the Parliamentary Committee Room" (1989), Parliamentary Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 2.

109. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 92.

110. Labour Party, General Secretary's Office, "General Election 1987: Preliminary Report by the General Secretary" (1987), GS 56/6/87, NEC 34/6/87, National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 4.

111. Ibid., 5.

112. Labour Party, National Executive Committee, "Moving Ahead: Statement to Conference 1987" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2.

changes that Labour acknowledged they had to confront.[113] Not only did it observe these social changes: it recognised the stark reality that without winning the South, "[Labour] cannot win the next election."[114] It set the tone for the next five years of work: widening the appeal of the party to new white-collar occupational groups and to women, confronting the divide in the working class between deprived and affluent members.[115] It announced a large-scale policy review and proclaimed "extending the freedom of the individual - every individual" the aim of democratic socialism.[116] This, then, was a radically different point of departure, and it would prefigure a radically different project of recovery, which is further detailed below.

6.4.2.1 Organisational changes, 1987-1992: the continued battle for OMOV

The general thrust of the reforms to increase autonomy for the leadership seems to have continued following the 1987 election defeat. The success of the Policy Review (see 6.4.2.2.) led to the establishment of a permanent National Policy Forum (NPF) to lead the process of policy formulation in a similar manner, thereby bypassing Conference's policy formulation functions. This was important, since conference was one of the traditional strongholds of the party's socialist left. The NPF would establish and maintain a standing programme.[117]

Meanwhile, the battle for OMOV may have seemed over with the adoption of the voluntary Local Electoral College in 1988, but in fact it was far from it. Conference abolished the LEC again in 1990 to be replaced with OMOV with an unspecified trade union involvement.[118] According to the report of the Trade Unions Links Review Group, this left the party without a new selection procedure for the 1992 election.[119] The version proposed by the report was effectively a reintroduction of the LEC but with the union vote cast by affiliated "registered supporters" among trade union branches affiliated with the local constituency party.[120] A similar change was also proposed to the Electoral College for leadership elections.[121] These changes would ultimately be implemented under the leadership of Kinnock's successor, John Smith.

The interesting thing about the final result of the battle for OMOV is that it clearly shows the effect of the strong formal and informal attachment of the Labour Party to its traditional supporters in the unionised working class. While initially, Kinnock and his team had intended to extend the franchise in the party to members only, a form of internal democratisation, the pressure to include the unions in some way led to a limited form

113. Ibid., 3-4.
114. Ibid., 3.
115. Ibid., 4.
116. Ibid., 6.
117. Labour Party, National Executive Committee, "Democracy and policy making for the 1990s: Statement by the National Executive Committee, Conference 90" (1990), National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 3.
118. Labour Party, Trade Union Links Review Group, "Trade Unions and the Labour Party: Final Report of the Review Group on Links between Trade Unions and the Labour Party" (1992), Archives of the Trade Union Links Review Group, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 15.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., 16; 21.
121. Ibid., 20.

of external democratisation alongside the proposed internal democratisation. Though limited to a very specific social group, many of the arguments offered for the system correspond to arguments later used for more general external democratisation schemes, regarding the "registered supporters" as a solid base in society and possible bridgehead to greater popular appeal.[122]

6.4.2.2 Programmatic changes, 1987-1992: the Policy Review

The most radical turnover in strategy between the 1983-1987 and 1987-1992 periods occurred in the field of programme. Before 1987, the party's attachment to its democratic socialist ideas seems to have prevailed and little attempts to broaden its profile were made. After 1987, it appears that the party was confronted with an electoral reality that made this untenable. As shall be argued in more detail below, the Policy Review process that dominated the programmatic efforts from 1987 onwards appears to have been particularly motivated by electoral expediency. In addressing its electoral liabilities, the party adopted not merely a broader profile, but was brought to shift various ideological boundaries as well, particularly on the acceptance of the free market.

The Policy Review was launched in 1987, soon after the general election. Having noted the tenacity with which the party stuck to its principles in the previous electoral cycle, it was rather surprising to find a large number of papers relating the work of the Review to the need for broadly appealing policies. *Moving Ahead*, with its reference to winning over those who had never voted for the party and the need to win in the South, was described as one of the review's points of reference by the General Secretary, Larry Whitty.[123] Similar statements are found in a statement by Kinnock to the PLP on the subject,[124] while the need to win in the South and/or "more prosperous areas" is referenced in the PLP records a number of times in the context of PLP discussions on the Policy Review.[125] The listening exercise with which the Review was to kick off also focused especially on areas where the party was weak, again mentioning the South as well as the Midlands.[126]

All this suggests an electoral motivation to the Policy Review. The essentially pragmatic backcloth of this wholesale policy overhaul becomes evident even further when studying its practice. The Policy Review Groups (PRGs) of the NEC and the Shadow Cabinet charged with the Review were presented with a polling report entitled *Labour and Britain in the 1990s* at the start in 1987.[127] The *Britain in the World* group also received a

122. Labour, TULRG, "Trade Unions and the Labour Party," 5-7.
123. L. Whitty, "Policy Review and 'Labour Listens': Note by the General Secretary" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2.
124. Kinnock, "Neil Kinnock Address to PLP," 2; 4; Labour, PLP, "Minutes of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 4th November 1987 at 11.30 AM in Committee Room 14," 1.
125. For instance: Labour Party, Parliamentary Labour Party, "Proceedings of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 6 July 1988 at 11.30 AM in Committee Room 14" (1988), Parliamentary Labour Party Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester; Labour Party, Parliamentary Labour Party, "Minutes of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 17 June 1987 at 12.00 Noon in Committee Room 14" (1987), Parliamentary Labour Party Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.
126. Labour Party, "An approach to policy-making" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 5.
127. Labour Party, "Labour & Britain in the 1990's." (1987), Multiple copies found among others in

report on specific attitudes to international issues which singled out defence policy as a "significant" factor for desertion of voters.[128] The terms of reference for this particular PRG also strikingly pose the electoral impact of the choices made as to Britain's role in the world as the first question to discuss during a preliminary discussion on values.[129] This PRG would later, after much discussion, rid the party of its unilateralist policy.[130]

Before any policy reports were authored, the boundaries of the party's ideological discourse were already being shifted. Kinnock and his deputy, Roy Hattersley, produced the first-ever formulation of the Labour Party's principles outside of the Constitution, *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values*, to serve as a foundation for the Policy Review.[131] The document notably contends that "... the true purpose of socialism is (...) a genuinely free society, in which the fundamental objective of government is the protection and extension of individual liberty."[132] *Moving Ahead* already took an advance on this earlier, and in a July note on policy development the Policy Director had also made a similar statement, but it does remain a remarkable departure from the usual collectivist understanding of the ideology.[133] This is especially notable when seen in conjunction to the youth and women communications reports of 1985, which had argued that this individualism was an area in which Thatcherism usually beat Labour.[134]

Comparison with alternative versions proposed to the NEC by left-wingers such as Tony Benn and David Blunkett and Bernard Crick is informative here. In the former, individualism is absent in favour of anti-capitalism and solidarity.[135] In the latter, it is enshrined in the French Revolutionary tripartite "liberty, equality, fraternity" as a framing device.[136] *Aims and Values* stands out by making enhancing individual liberty the sole aim of democratic socialism, showing the influence of the spirit of the times on the thinking of the soft left-right leadership tandem.[137]

This has been some time coming – in fact, the theme of a more individualist presentation of socialist values already occurs in a 1983 memo outlining Kinnock's strategy for

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Britain in the World and Economic Efficiency PRG papers, Papers on the Policy Review, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

128. R. Osborn, "Britain in the World Policy Review Group: Quantitative Polling on These Topics" (1987), PD(I):2104/December 1987, Papers of the Britain in the World Policy Review Group, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 9.

129. Labour Party, Policy Directorate, "Policy Review Group Britain in the World, 10 January 1988 - Discussion on Values and Principles" (1988), PD(I):1247:Jan88, Papers of the Britain in the World Policy Review Group, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 2.

130. Labour Party, "Meet the Challenge, Make the Change: A New Agenda for Britain: Final Report of Labour's Policy Review for the 1990s" (1989), Papers on the Policy Review, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

131. Kinnock and Hattersley, "Democratic Socialist Aims and Values."

132. Ibid., 3.

133. Labour Party, Policy Directorate, "Policy Development for the 1990's: A Preliminary Note from the Policy Director" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, 2.

134. Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters"; Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters."

135. T. Benn, "The Aims and Objectives of the Labour Party: A Note by Tony Benn" (1988), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

136. D. Blunkett and B. Crick, "The Labour Party's Values and Aims: an Unofficial Statement" (1988), Parliamentary Labour Party Archive, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

137. Kinnock and Hattersley, "Democratic Socialist Aims and Values."

the leadership election that year.[138] This memo also contains some of the lines of thought that would later be prominent in the policy review, among others its change in attitude to large-scale nationalisation, a shift in attitudes to statism away from top-heavy state control and its attention to ecological concerns.[139] The line of thinking was further confirmed by the above-mentioned 1985 round of communications research with an eye to developing a strategy for young and female voters, which found that Thatcherism had changed voter's attitudes to be more individualistic, entrepreneurial and more hostile to left-wing extremism in particular.[140] The report on women, an important target constituency to Labour also mentioned in *Moving Ahead*, recommended a communications strategy to "play down ideological heritage".[141]

Building on *Aims and Values*, the Policy Review's reports endorsed the market principle for the allocations of "most goods and services", rejected old-style nationalisation as the only form of public ownership and put special focus on the Environment with an entire section on quality-of-life issues, among others.[142] This rapid change in policy direction was aided by the total sidelining of the Conference by a NEC-Shadow Cabinet tandem (the Policy Review Groups were officially working groups of the two bodies and their reports were made non-amendable).

The change is especially notable in the most controversial policy area of the decade, being nuclear disarmament. As already mentioned above, evidence to the PRGs as well as opinion in the PLP seems to be that it was a potential liability, far from the dogged adherence to it in the 1983-1987 electoral cycle. It is no surprise, therefore, that the Policy Review abandoned it in favour of a multilateral nuclear disarmament policy, helped along by international developments, although the issue was still left open in the first report.[143] And while employment and public services still figure in *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*, the final report of the Policy Review, the report chooses to focus on education and training in employment more than on job creation, and takes a consumer perspective to public services.[144]

In effect, it seems that the reports constitute an attempt by the Labour Party to regain its economic credibility by redirecting and broadening its policies. The acceptance of the market mechanism and the concept of the state as a means instead of an end, referred to as the enabling state by Shaw,[145] was central to this extension strategy. In addition, the efforts to extend into new politics issues, which were also present in memos from before Kinnock's leadership, were seen as being of particular importance to winning in the South,

138. Labour, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes," 2.
139. Ibid., 2-3.
140. Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters"; Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters."
141. Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters."
142. Kinnock and Hattersley, "Democratic Socialist Aims and Values," 10; Labour, "Meet the Challenge, Make the Change," 5; Labour Party, "Social Justice and Economic Efficiency: First Report of Labour's Policy Review for the 1990's" (1988), Papers on the Policy Review, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 5.
143. Labour, "Meet the Challenge, Make the Change," 86-87; Labour, "Social Justice and Economic Efficiency," 48.
144. Labour, "Meet the Challenge, Make the Change," 6-7.
145. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 92.

as evidenced by a memo from the Environment spokesman to the Shadow Cabinet which also seems to have been inspired by good electoral performance by the minor Green party.[146] The clear electoralist backcloth of the overhaul seems to further underscore the general extension strategy, swinging Labour back well beyond the traditional pragmatism of the old right. The evidence linking the Policy Review to the 1987 defeat, but also to documents in the previous cycle, further strengthens the evidence that the electoral system and the constraints it imposed upon Labour played a large role in the radical change of direction the Policy Review represented.

6.4.2.3 Tactical changes, 1987-1992: continued broadening

Moving Ahead showed very clearly that the party leadership had now accepted the electoral realities, with a stark message to the conference: if the party did not win in the south and broaden its appeal, it would never again win a general election.[147] This matches the expected impact of the British electoral system in that it was a constraint upon Labour's actions. It is significant that *Moving Ahead*'s aims of working to broaden the party's appeal, and particularly its stated objectives of winning in the South, appear to have been strongly linked to many of the measures taken on other dimensions. The electoral motivation of the project, in this way, becomes very clear: Labour had every intention of broadening its appeal.

The most far-reaching changes in campaign strategy had already been seen through. *Moving Ahead* praised the party's new professionalism in the organisation and implementation of its campaigns.[148] The party can still be said to have intensified its already extension-focused tactical strategy of broadening its core electorate. However, now it was imbued with a new sense of purpose, as the other dimensions were also put in the light of this commitment. This provides support for the idea that while internal factors might have a differential impact on the strategy, the impact of the electoral system can be felt across the board. The fact that the geographical and demographic elements of party competition remained at the forefront of the leadership's mind is evidenced by a number of explicit references to them underlying other measures.[149]

While between 1987 and 1992 not much had been done to project a more inclusive image through candidate selection, the second electoral cycle saw an attempt to diversify the party's slate of candidates. A consultation report on the representation of women in Labour from 1990 assigned Labour a "male" image, despite its relatively high quantity of women MPs.[150] In conjunction with the fact that *Moving Ahead* consciously proclaimed women voters a target group, this produced a need to increase the number of women

146. J. Cunningham and J. Newbigin, "Quality of Life: Proposals" (1988), Parliamentary Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester; J. Cunningham, "Developing Our Political Momentum on Environmental Policy Issues" (1989), Parliamentary Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

147. Labour, NEC, "Moving Ahead," 3.

148. Ibid., 2.

149. See the discussion on programmatic changes in section 6.4.2.2. above.

150. Labour Party, National Executive Committee, "Consultative Document: Representation of Women in the Labour Party" (1990), National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 3.

in the PLP in particular.[151] The 1987 Conference had already made a start, adopting a rule that required CLPs to put at least one woman on the shortlist during selection procedures where one had been nominated.[152] In 1990, the Party Conference went even further, supporting a NEC statement calling for a 50/50 representation of women in ten years or three electoral cycles time.[153] Consultation for this statement also included other quota proposals, including for the NEC itself and CLP executives.[154] The PLP had already adopted a quota for the Shadow Cabinet.[155] This commitment put a strong compulsion to act upon the NEC, which was already conducting its review of parliamentary selection.

The NEC realized that positive discrimination measures would need to be implemented to achieve the quota set by Conference, leading to proposals for all-women shortlists being considered. Here, the executive committee seemed willing to consider it, spurred on by the Women's Committee and the Women's Conference, who published a number of reports and papers advocating this far-going measure to increase the number of women Labour MPs.[156] However, they ran into the influence of the CLPs, who jealously guarded their influence on shortlisting and selection in general from national interference. After a consultation paper showed the reticence of the CLPs towards new rules on selections and to increase women's representation in particular, the matter appears to have been dropped until after the 1992 election.[157] Though this is never explicitly stated, it might be that the party's leadership had to pick its battles carefully once again, and prioritized the implementation of OMOV in selections over the implementation of all-women shortlists. Still, the concrete initiatives taken by the leadership to increase women representation fit into the picture of a tactical extension strategy.

With the parallel changes going on in policy, Labour became much better equipped to build on the work it had done in the previous Parliamentary term. In fact, despite the professionalism of the campaign in general, there might even have been a tendency to overdo it, as witnessed by the final rally of the 1992 general election campaign at which Labour, confident that it would beat the Conservatives, presented itself as the government-in-waiting, a type of arrogance that was lampooned by the press.[158] Nevertheless, even this rally shows how conscious Labour had become of publicity and how consciously it courted a broader appeal. Alongside the 1987-1992 changes on the tactical dimension, therefore, Labour's campaign saw it continue and strengthen the extension-based strategy of the previous electoral cycle.

151. Labour, NEC, "Moving Ahead," 4.
152. Perrigo, "Women and Change in the Labour Party, 1979-1995," 127.
153. Labour, NEC, "Consultative Document: Representation of Women in the Labour Party," 6.
154. Ibid., 3-4.
155. Ibid., 3.
156. Labour Party, National Executive Committee. Women's Committee, "Parliamentary Selection" (1991), NECW/1/91, National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 3-4; Labour Party, National Executive Committee. Women's Committee, "NEC Consultation Paper on the Selection of Parliamentary Candidates: Notes of Comments from the NEC Womens Committee at the Meeting held 9th of April 1990" (1990), NECW/22/6/90, National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 1.
157. Labour Party, National Executive Committee, "NEC Consultation on Selection of Parliamentary Candidates" (1990), DO/84/6/90, National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 6-7.
158. Shaw, *The Labour Party Since 1979*, 143.

Table 6.2: Overview of the Labour Party recovery strategy, 1983-1992

Cycle	**Organisational**	**Programmatic**	**Tactical**	**Overall**
First cycle, 1983-1987	Internal democratisation (*reinforcement*) • First push for OMOV in the form of Local Electoral College (*reinforcement*)	Highlight traditional values (*reinforcement*) • Stance on nuclear disarmament maintained (*reinforcement*) • NHS, the welfare state and industrial relations named as policy priorities (*reinforcement*)	Broader targeting (*extension*) • Red rose logo (*extension*) • Floating vote as "primary target voters" (*extension*) • Mandatory shortlisting of at least one woman candidate (*extension*)	Reinforcement
Second cycle, 1987-1992	External democratisation (*extension*) • Local Electoral College reintroduced with individual votes for "registered supporters" among trade unions (*extension*)	Downplay traditional values (*extension*) • Declaration of individual freedom as aim of socialism (*extension*) • Policy Review explicitly tasked with policies appealing to non-core voters (*extension*) • Unilateral nuclear disarmament and large-scale nationalisation dropped (*extension*)	Broader targeting (*extension*) • Conscious effort to win in the South (*extension*) • Quota for women on the Shadow Cabinet and failed push for All-Women Shortlists (*extension*)	Extension

6.5 Conclusion: The inexorable march of New Labour?

Labour's recovery strategy unfolded in two phases corresponding to the two electoral cycles, as can be seen in table 6.2. In the first electoral cycle, the party appears to have been beholden to the ideological attachment of the Labour left and the strong electoral base attachment resulting from the link with the unions. The strategy on the organisational and programmatic dimensions during the first cycle is unabashedly reinforcing, highlighting socialist values and traditional Labour issues as well as strengthening the power of party members. The resolve with which the leadership clung to positions such as unilateral nuclear disarmament as policies that were not to be changed merely for the sake of electoral expediency, in spite of their popularity, shows how ideological attachment contributed to the programmatic reinforcement strategy. Meanwhile, the link with the unions played a strong role in determining the form of OMOV as a Local Electoral College in candidate selections. This shows, at least on these specific dimensions, that factors such as ideological attachment and electoral base attachment do play a role in determining the preferred recovery strategy in the first cycle. Admittedly, the reinforcement strategy could also be the result of the functional need to win back core voters lost in 1983, but this seems less likely, especially when considering the tactical dimension.

The first-cycle strategy on the tactical dimension presents an outlier, because it sought to broaden the party's appeal and is therefore an extension-based strategy. It poses a problem for both the purely functional explanation noted above and the general influences of electoral base attachment and ideological attachment expressed in propositions 3 and 4. The tactical dimension is the first place where on would expect a party with strong electoral base attachment to show its commitment to its core voters. It is puzzling that this does not appear to be the case and that, in fact, Labour was both playing the floating vote and consciously trying to dismantle its previous radical and arguably male-dominated image. A logical explanation for this seems to be that the leadership could operate with a reasonable degree of autonomy here after the NEC, determined to improve the communications of the party, established the CSC and the Communications Directorate headed by Kinnock's appointee, Peter Mandelson. From the archival documents, it appears that Kinnock was reminded at multiple times of the decline of the working-class base and the threat posed by Thatcher to elements of Labour's core vote.[159] This might explain why on the tactical dimension, the party pursued an extension strategy rather than a reinforcement strategy.

Before moving onto the second cycle, it is good to raise and discuss another possible alternative explanation: that a party like Labour, upon being defeated quite badly, would always retreat into the familiar issues they were "most trusted on".[160] While this is, in most regards, a question only comparative research can answer, it has to be addressed. Perhaps the best way to do so is to recall that the leftward turn had already been explored under Michael Foot's leadership and that 1983 had clearly shown that this had been out

159. The earliest examples of this are found in Labour, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes," 2; Hain, "Memo on leadership strategy," 11.
160. Labour, CSC, "Campaigning Strategy."

of tune with public opinion. Furthermore, the presence of the very strong centrist Alliance vote could have suggested to Labour leaders that they needed to move to the centre. It would have been perfectly reasonable for figures in the party to suggest that policy as well as presentation needed to change, but the party was clearly not ready for it. It seems likely that the combination of the trade union connection and entrenchment of left-wing ideology within the party combined to inspire a more traditional strategy in the first Parliament following the shock. This fits well with the idea that initial preferences are shaped by attitudes to the electoral base and the party's ideology.

If the first-cycle strategy provides considerable evidence towards an effect for ideological attachment and electoral base attachment, the second-cycle strategy seems to strongly confirm proposition 6 on the effect of the electoral system. Where the first-cycle strategy contained clear reinforcement elements, the second-cycle strategy is uniformly extending in orientation. The 1987 election, which was lost again while the Conservatives retained their landslide majority, seems to have driven home to the leadership and the NEC that the electoral system would not allow Labour to win another election (as noted in *Moving Ahead*) if changes were not made.[161] The biggest contrast is no doubt on the programmatic dimension: from a purely reinforcing strategy adamantly against downplaying any policy liabilities for electoral expediency to the Policy Review, which downplayed and reinterpreted Labour values by introducing a more individualist and market-based version of socialism. Given the strength of the left only a decade ago, this is remarkable. What is also remarkable is that the NEC and leadership made no attempts to obscure what they were doing: starting from *Moving Ahead*, the electoral background of the Review is made quite clear, and indeed many references in the minutes of various bodies to the need to win in the South and among non-Labour voters in general seem to provide strong evidence that the change of strategy was indeed related to the constraints of the FPTP system. The party seems to have paid a lot of attention to other parties and their success stories. Obviously, this is the case with Thatcherism, which was successful (as the 1984 communications studies showed) in part because of its individualist and market-based focus.[162] However, it also monitored some of its smallest competitors: when the Greens did well in local elections in the South where Labour needed to win, the Shadow Cabinet took it as a sign that the efforts on quality-of-life and environmental policies needed to be stepped up.[163]

Looking at the battle for OMOV, it becomes clear that the unions remained an important factor even when Labour adopted its extension strategy. We have seen that Kinnock and his team wanted a mandatory system for selection and reselection that would shut the union vote out entirely in favour of a vote by individual members.[164] They never put this proposal to Conference or even the NEC because, as they themselves well understood, the unions and the left would not suffer such a diminishment of their influence lightly.[165]

161. Labour, NEC, "Moving Ahead," 3.
162. Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters"; Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters."
163. Cunningham and Newbigin, "Quality of Life"; Cunningham, "Developing Our Political Momentum on Environmental Policy Issues."
164. Hewitt, "Reselection: One Member One Vote"; Clarke, "Reselection - Issues and Possibilities."
165. Hewitt, "Reselection: One Member One Vote"; Clarke, "Reselection - Issues and Possibilities."

Eventually, the second-cycle proposals that included individual registered supporters from the trade unions in the party's OMOV elections and selection procedures were developed as the solution. These proposals may have shifted power away from Labour's members and they may have been justified by the reasoning that it might bring the party more in touch with a broader group of voters, but their scope was limited to the unions. This shows that, in the final version of OMOV adopted under Kinnock's successor John Smith (still against significant union resistance), the value placed on the link with the trade union movement was still a major factor.

The final, more radical recovery strategy pursued under Tony Blair's leadership from 1994 onwards is directly connected to the outcome of the 1983-1992 recovery process. The agency of Blair and his allies Mandelson and Brown is key to the way the strategy was taken even further into the extension direction, most prominently through re-writing Clause IV to omit the commitment to nationalisation of the means of production from the Party Constitution. However, this would not have been possible or indeed conceivable had the Policy Review not reinterpreted the programmatic and to some extent the ideological foundations of the party to become more individualist and less statist. Although strengthened by the takeover of a new generation after the sudden death of Kinnock's direct successor John Smith in 1994, the same dynamic we have described above is at play. Forced by the constraints of the electoral system, Labour pursued an extension strategy in which it reinterpreted key parts of its heritage such as its ties to the unions and its democratic socialist ideology, ending up in the end as the aptly-named New Labour.

7 Democrats 66, 1982-1989

7.1 Introduction

"Regeren is halveren": "to govern is to halve"[1] – an apt if slightly brutal description of the perennial problems faced by Democrats 66 (D66).[2] From its foundation in 1966 as a movement for democratic reform, D66 has gone from (potential) coalition partner to demoralised remnant a number of times, starting with the first crisis in 1972, with the most recent one occurring in 2006. Support for the Democrats is highly volatile. One only needs to look at table 4.3 to notice that this party is particularly unlucky and vulnerable to crisis. Save the first crisis in 1972, all of these crises occurred during or after D66 participated in government. The sense of deep crisis occurring in the party after defeat is very visible: in 1974, after the 1972 crisis was compounded by disastrous provincial election results, the only thing that prevented the party's dissolution was the lack of a qualified majority at the congress convened to debate the decision.[3] Since the 1972 crisis occurred only six years after the party was founded and may have involved all sorts of concerns peculiar to the party's newness (see chapter 4), this chapter discusses the second instance of crisis in D66's history, which started in 1982.

The 1982 crisis is captured in the title of the memoirs of outgoing party leader Jan Terlouw: "to seventeen seats and back" (*"Naar zeventien zetels en terug"*).[4] Just a year before, in 1981, D66 had won a great victory and taken seventeen seats. After participating in the ill-fated Van Agt-Den Uyl Cabinet with CDA and the social-democratic *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA) from 1981 to 1982, new elections a year later returned D66 to only six seats. During the crisis that followed, D66 showed itself a party with a very strong self-conception as a movement of political renewal. The party was struggling with the lack of a well-defined social base and other problems deriving from its newness and its wish not to be like the other parties. Rather than confront these problems directly, however, the party sought to work around them, showing how attached they were to their idea that they were different from the major parties. It is this crisis that forms the focus of this chapter.

1. Title of the following documentary on the 1982 crisis: R. Bruins Slot, "D66: Regeren is halveren," Episode of the Dutch documentary TV series *Andere Tijden*, accessed January 15, 2018, `https://anderetijden.nl/aflevering/396/D66-regeren-is-halveren`.

2. In the middle of the time period under discussion, the party changed its name slightly from "Democrats 1966", abbreviated D'66, to Democrats 66, abbreviated D66. The latter form is preferred in this chapter for the sake of uniformity.

3. M. S. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie: de Geschiedenis van D66, 1966-2003* (Den Haag: SDU, 2003), 123.

4. J. Terlouw, *Naar Zeventien Zetels en Terug: Politiek Dagboek 9 maart 1981-5 november 1982* (Utrecht: Veen, 1983).

Within the framework of the case selection, D66 was selected as a party in a system of Proportional Representation with weak electoral base attachment. One important feature of the party is its lack of and even antipathy towards the old pillarized mode of politics in which parties defended the interests of particular social groups. Not only does D66 lack strong electoral base attachment through formal ties, there also appears to be an informal convention against such strong attachment. This should lead to an initial preference for the extension strategy, followed by a reinforcement strategy as the constraints of the electoral context kick in. This will be the subject of section 7.2, which presents an introduction to the party and measures up the party on the independent variables electoral base attachment, ideological attachment and its relationship to its environment and formulating clear operational expectations based on the propositions presented in chapter three. Section 7.3 will briefly discuss the 1982 general election and its circumstances. The results of the analysis will be presented in section 7.4, testing the more detailed expectations generated in section 7.2. The conclusions drawn based on this analysis will be discussed in section 7.5.

7.2 D66 in 1982: setting the stage

In 1982, Democrats 66 was a relatively recent formation. Its origins lie in the democratisation movement of the 1960s in the Netherlands, mobilised by the idea of breaking open the old 'pillarized' society.[5] Some have therefore argued that it is a catch-all party, rejecting the old cleavage-based mode of politics and arguing instead for a programmatic basis to politics.[6] Although some founders of the party took their inspiration from the pre-war social-liberal *Vrijzinnig-Democratische Bond* (Liberal-Democratic Federation), the party rejected any sort of ideological identification.[7] A major aim was to realign the party system into a progressive and a conservative camp. When asked what should happen to the current parties, Van Mierlo famously expressed that "they should explode then", leading to the phrase "explosion theory" for the idea.[8]

D66 had a flying start at its first election in 1967, winning an impressive seven seats out of 150 in the Dutch lower house. In the first period of its existence, it pursued its goals of realignment by trying to found a new Progressive People's Party together with the PvdA and the smaller Radicals (PPR).[9] The 1972 election saw the formation of a pre-election coalition between these parties, even including a "Shadow Cabinet" that would take office if they got a majority between them. However, this coalition failed to win a majority, in part because of D66's losses. A devastating provincial election defeat in 1974 saw a serious debate about dissolving the party. Though a majority of the congress favoured this decision, it fell short of the two-thirds majority required to take it.[10]

This underscores an essential part of D66's DNA: its democratic party organisation.

5. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 15.
6. Ibid., 408.
7. Ibid., 19.
8. Ibid., 36, original text: "die moeten dan maar ontploffen".
9. Ibid., 414.
10. Ibid., 123.

Determined to avoid concentration and cumulation of power, the founders made these an essential concern in designing the new party's organisation.[11] This led to what was without a doubt the most democratically organised of the Dutch parties at the time, as the party operated on the principle of One Member One Vote (OMOV) while other parties still used delegate models. At every level, individual members debated and made the decisions. This included the national level, which had two notably innovative features. First of all, the candidate selection process operated via an OMOV postal ballot where members could rank all the candidates.[12] Secondly, it had an OMOV-based national congress, which uniquely went by the formal Dutch term for such meetings in associations: *algemene ledenvergadering* (ALV; general members' assembly) rather than the usual *partijcongres*.[13]

This body, then, was not like its counterparts which bore that latter name. It was chaired by chairpersons appointed by the national committee, but who were not members of that committee.[14] Since 1981, general meetings of the branches were empowered to select amendments and motions for the national congress, although 25 members could still bypass this requirement.[15] What coordinating role there was at the congress was played by the programme and reporting committees, elected by the congress itself, which had the task of structuring the agenda.[16] The programme committee and national committee could, as in other parties, advise on whether motions or amendments should be adopted or rejected.[17] Because of all this, the documents of the highly democratic national congress contain important information, since many of the decisions on the recovery would eventually be taken or at least discussed there.

However, the unwieldiness of a national congress consisting of hundreds or even thousands of individual members means strategic direction would still need to be provided by another body. According to the statutes, the main focus of the national committee (*Hoofdbestuur*) and its subsidiary national executive (*Dagelijks Bestuur*) was solely orga-

11. R. A. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij: Veranderende Partijorganisatie in Nederland 1960-1990* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1992), 107.

12. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 105.3 HR, accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

13. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, Ch. 2. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

14. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 15.1 HR. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

15. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 13.2 HR. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

16. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 14 HR, 37-38 HR and 130.5 HR. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

17. This was not provided in the party rulebooks, but it happened in practice. Any set of papers sent to members for the national congress contains the advice of HB pertaining to each motion or amendment on the agenda.

nizational.[18] According to Van der Land, this was regarded as its proper role.[19] However, the political role of the body, even if it can only exercise it through non-binding opinions, must not be underestimated. As a coordinating body, the national committee specifically expressed its wish to play a political role during the 1982-1989 crisis.[20] Its responsibility for the preparation of the national congress and the formulation of proposals flowing from policy documents presented to the ALV make it an influential body in this regard, and its archives therefore play a key role in mapping out the changes made.

It should be noted that there were harsh anti-cumulation measures involved in the national committee's work as well: its members, either elected to the national executive by the congress or elected as regional representatives, could not hold any other party function save for membership of the programme committee, and could not be an elected representative.[21] In addition, they were limited to two terms.[22] This means the rate of turnover in the executive was relatively high.[23] The same goes for executives at sub-national levels of government, where the term limits occasionally led to the situation that not enough volunteers could be found and made the party organisationally weak.

The final national organ that should be discussed plays a less prominent role. D66's party council or *Adviesraad* was a purely advisory body, set up to provide some opportunity to influence policy for members between congresses.[24] The original statutes do not include the party council, since it was feared that it would only complicate communications between members and executive.[25] However, after the failure of an experiment in 1967 with "sample meetings" (*steekproefvergaderingen*) of members selected by lot to provide this advisory function, the party council was established.[26] Its position was rather ambiguous. For example, the council was allowed to advise the national committee, but not the national congress.[27]

This leaves the parliamentary parties in both houses of Parliament. Koole notes that D66 MPs regarded their duty to render account to the membership as part of their man-

18. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 26. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

19. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 363.

20. An example of this can be found in O. Scheltema, "Beleidsvoornemens Hoofdbestuur; onderdeel politiek," Paper on the priorities of the national committee in the political field (1987), HB.DB-87/090, inventory nr. 105, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

21. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 12.1 HR. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

22. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 25.2 HR. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

23. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 363.

24. To keep a uniform set of terms throughout, the term "party council" will be used to refer to the advisory council, since it is functionally equivalent, albeit much weaker than other party councils of Dutch parties.

25. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 109.

26. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 109; Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 42.

27. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 21. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

date.[28] Still, since the parliamentary party was accountable to the semi-annual national congress and not necessarily to the national committee, this accountability did not detract much from the autonomy of the party's elected representatives. There seems to have been a division of labour between the parliamentary party in the lower house, which pushed day-to-day policies, and the extra-parliamentary organization, which undertook mid-term and long-term policy development and ultimately was able to set the priorities of each election manifesto. It should be noted, however, that this depended on the stature of the leader of the party, who headed the list: party founder Hans van Mierlo and his successor Jan Terlouw could permit themselves more strategic control due to their popularity than Terlouw's successor Maarten Engwirda.[29]

D66 is a small party. Its record at the time of the 1982 crisis, achieved in 1981, was 17 seats, just over 10 per cent of the 150-seat Dutch lower house.[30] Nevertheless, it has been regarded as remarkably successful during its early existence, for such a young party. D66 never scored below six seats in the lower house even in 1982. This is a significant criterium for the party, as the party's founders considered this the threshold below which one was an ineffectual "splinter party".[31] In addition, unlike many smaller parties in the Dutch party system at the time, D66 was successful in attaining a seat at the cabinet table for itself on two occasions, in 1972 and in 1981. The only other small party in the system to succeed at this prior to 1982 was Democratic Socialists '70. Therefore, and given the occasional spikes in the polls, D66 can be regarded as perhaps "the largest of the small parties" or even as "the smallest of the large parties".[32]

Nevertheless, it remained characteristically small. In a time when the major parties retained upwards of 100,000 members, D66 had around 15,000.[33] Just a decade earlier, in the depths of the 1974 crisis, the Democrats had only a few hundreds of members left, showing that its membership fluctuated in tandem with the party's electoral fortunes. Van der Land also makes this observation that membership involvement plummets in an electoral downturn.[34] This also goes to show that attachment to the party itself waxes and wanes with the ability to implement its aims. The membership is also unevenly spread: some local branches were unsustainably small, with executives serving for long consecutive periods because there is nobody else to do the job.[35]

In the years leading up to the 1982 crisis, D66 found its feet again under the leadership of Jan Terlouw. Terlouw brought in a new focus on the environment and technology and a more liberal profile.[36] Under his leadership, the party began to grow again, profiling

28. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 245.
29. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 366-367.
30. H. Döring and P. Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)," Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, `http://www.parlgov.org`.
31. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 73.
32. M. S. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie: de Geschiedenis van D66, 1966-2003* (Den Haag: SDU, 2003), 374.
33. R. A. Koole and H. van de Velde, "The Netherlands," in *Party Organizations. A Data Handbook*, ed. R. S. Katz and P. Mair (London: SAGE, 1992), 636-642.
34. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 358.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., 414.

itself with the slogan "the reasonable alternative" and considering itself a "fourth current" alongside the Christian Democratic, Social Democratic and Liberal currents in Dutch politics. The focus shifted away from "exploding" the party system. An important tradition of D66 since its foundation was to express preference for a coalition before the elections, rather than afterwards, in the so-called "strategy resolutions". By adopting such a resolution at each pre-election national congress, D66 endeavoured to give clarity to voters about which coalitions they preferred. 1981 saw the party get its preferred coalition, with the party joining the PvdA and the CDA, traditional rivals, in Cabinet. Unfortunately, the rivalry between these two proved unsurmountable and the Cabinet collapsed.[37] The history of D66 paints a clear picture of its base attachment, ideological attachment and the external challenges it faced, as shall be further explored below.

7.2.1 Electoral base attachment

D66 has had a catch-all mentality from its foundation.[38] Its founding membership consisted of a group of members who no longer felt at home in the traditional parties.[39] The chief reason D66 can be seen as having low electoral base attachment is its own definition of its *raison d'être*: to "ensure political relations based on concrete party programmes" and to "ensure maximum possible extension of the circle of those involved in political and social decision-making".[40] The party, according to its own ideas, was a temporary affair intended to make itself obsolete – in fact, it was not clear from the beginning that it would be a party at all.[41] The first aim described above can be supplemented easily by adding "rather than on social cleavages", offering the reason for D66's catch-all orientation. D66 had no wish to become a party based on a sectional interest or religious group. Instead, the party wanted to appeal to the entire populace based on its programme.[42]

The party seemed to have been aware that not having a well-defined social base was an electoral disadvantage, but changing it does not appear to have been a discussion. An evaluation report produced by Political Deputy Chairman Bob van den Bos after the 1982 general election analysed extensively why the party's electoral support fluctuated so much over its existence, naming the lack of a concrete voter base as one of the major factors.[43] Nevertheless, he also speaks about it in positive terms, and does not seem to advocate changing it.

D66, then, scores low on our operationalisation of electoral base attachment. As a result of its historical heritage opposing the remnants of pillarization, it lacked the ties most of its contemporaries had to groups representing its electoral base. In fact, it was

37. See Terlouw, *Naar Zeventien Zetels en Terug*.

38. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 407-408.

39. J. J. Godschalk, "Enige Politieke en Sociale Kenmerken van de Oprichters van D'66," *Acta Politica* 5, no. 1 (1969): 65-67.

40. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 3. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

41. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 25.

42. This understanding of not wishing to be an interest-based party occurs frequently in the primary sources as well. See for example B. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," *Democraat* 15, no. 7 (1982): 17; See also Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 380.

43. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 17-18.

quite aware that its normal vote was relatively small and that it had to appeal to most of its voters anew at every election. D66's relationship to its electoral base is coloured by the way the party registered this but did not seem to want to change it combined with its goal to promote programmatic politics and the insistence found in the primary sources on not becoming an interest party. This makes D66 not just a party without formal ties to its electoral base, but also one that has informal conventions to the effect that such attachment is not really desirable.

All this should lead to an extension strategy according to the propositions formulated in chapter three. Since it has a weak electoral base attachment, the opportunity costs of pursuing an extension strategy should be lower. In addition, the history and traditions of D66 should increase the costs of appealing to any sort of social base, since this is exactly what the party had always criticised in the rest of the Dutch party system. In all these ways, the party's exceptionally low degree of base attachment leads to a strong expectation of an extend strategy.

7.2.2 Ideological Attachment

It is uncomfortable to speak about D66 in terms of ideology, a lack of comfort that extends to the party itself. As has been noted earlier, some of its founders placed it in the tradition of the pre-war VDB, a social-liberal party. The discussion resurfaced quite a few times whenever the party was accused by the media and its political opponents of not having a clear position: should the party more clearly identify as social-liberal? However, the use of the ideological label "liberal" encountered serious reservations every time it was proposed, revealing the complicated relationship of the party with ideological politics.[44] Rather than as an ideological party, D66 viewed itself as an essentially pragmatic party, based solely on its programme rather than a set of principles.[45]

Still, as we have noted in chapter three, pragmatism itself can be an ideology under the definition of ideology as a "characterisation of a belief system that goes to the heart of a party's identity".[46] In this sense, D66 is highly attached to its ideology because it was so fanatically committed to its programmatic and pragmatic basis. Even if it strenuously denied having an ideology, and its members might have strongly believed this to be true, the party still objectively did have a set of ideas forming the party's basis to which it was strongly attached. This is expressed by its own set of signal words (see chapter 4), such as the "duality" of the party among and opposed to the existing parties, the "explosion theory", the "reasonable alternative", "fourth current", and so forth.[47] The party was also set in its ways when it came to things like the strategy resolutions detailing coalition preferences before each election, even when it disadvantaged the party, and the set of ideas about broad participation also extended to its own organisation.[48]

44. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 115;395.

45. Ibid., 32.

46. P. Mair and C. Mudde, "The Party Family and its Study," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): 220.

47. Note that these terms are somewhat more fluid and represent various views of D66's role. The "Fourth Current" is a more social-liberal understanding of the party. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the set of ideas that D66 is attached to is rather social-liberal in nature.

48. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 351; Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 106.

Ironically, it was precisely D66's contention of not having an ideology, of not really wanting to belong to the party system it wanted to "blow up" that made it highly ideological by chapter four's definition. By the very act of refusing an ideological label with reference to its self-assumed role opposing the current (ideological) political system, the party casts itself as highly attached to this particular set of ideas. The core of D66's ideology is therefore formed by its democratisation ideas: opposition to the old pillarised system, commitment to programmatic politics, belief in the necessity of presenting a clear choice to electors and belief in progressive politics.[49] These constitute a radical democratic element in the party's set of ideas that complements an emerging social-liberal identity.[50]

It should be noted that Van der Land, in his history of D66, casts the period between 1972 and 1982 as a time in which the radical democratic identity of the party had been downplayed in favour of its social-liberal tradition.[51] After the failure of the attempts at realignment on the progressive side of politics, D66 seems to have let go of the idea that it could explode the party system in that way and began profiling itself more as a normal party among those already active in the party system. The term "fourth current" used in those years indicates this, since it explicitly acknowledges the existence of the party alongside the prevailing three currents represented by PvdA, CDA and VVD.[52]

In the light of the theory, D66 can be seen as highly attached to its ideology. Although the party had extended its programmatic scope beyond democratisation under Terlouw, this did not change the core of the party's belief system. This is evidenced by several practices symbolic to the party's identity as a party of democratic renewal, which continued despite imposing electoral disadvantage. This most prominently included the strategy resolutions and the high level of direct democracy within the party. In addition, the party's programme was central to its identity. This illustrates how attached D66 was to the core of its belief system (democratisation and political renewal) and should produce pressures towards a reinforcement strategy by making it more costly to change away from this path.

7.2.3 External environment: electoral and party system

The Dutch system of Proportional Representation (PR) without an electoral threshold beyond its natural one-seat level is a highly proportional system, as shown by the high Rose index of proportionality of 97.65[53] at the 1982 general election.[54] The lack of an electoral threshold makes the system relatively mild on a young minor party like D66.[55] It enabled the party to win seven seats at its debut in 1967 and has theoretically made the

49. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 397.

50. As shall be touched upon below, D66 became increasingly comfortable referring to itself as a liberal party during the 1980s.

51. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 414.

52. Ibid., 180.

53. Calculated by the author based on data from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."

54. The Rose index is calculated by subtracting the sum of the differences between each party's voteshare and seatshare at a given election, divided by two, from 100. See R. Rose, ed., *International Encyclopedia of Elections* (Washington: CQ Press, 2000)

55. See also K. Vossen, *Vrij vissen in het Vondelpark: Kleine politieke partijen in Nederland 1918-1940* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2003), 37.

party a viable option for every voter willing to consider the party.[56] It is mechanically as easy to win seats as it is to lose them. This was part of the reason for D66's fluctuating support levels. Combined with the fact that it had a relatively small core vote, the fact that it had to compete for every floating vote with all other parties made it very susceptible to fluctuations in its and other parties' popularity. Since the other parties generally had larger core votes to fall back on despite the incipient partisan dealignment, D66 was more heavily hit by these than most.

The system is not entirely devoid of stumbling blocks brought on by psychological effects, however. Since the largest party is almost always part of the Cabinet coalition, it matters very much whether a left-wing or a right-wing party has the plurality position. In addition, whether or not a party can get large enough to negotiate for government office is a consideration in voting behaviour which ensures minor parties can only enter into play when the larger parties are too small to govern without a minor partner. This means that for D66, the feasibility of the traditional CDA-VVD or CDA-PvdA combinations might make it harder for the party to enter government.

More than in most other cases, D66's own conception of its place in the system is important. The party had a complicated concept of its own role, placing it both alongside and opposed to the existing political parties.[57] In the former instance, it operated as a part of the political system, roughly corresponding to a social-liberal sub-current in Dutch politics. In the latter interpretation, the party was fundamentally opposed to the old parties, on the grounds that they obscured a fundamentally simple progressive-conservative dynamic that would make politics much clearer and more democratic.[58] For this reason, it could not entirely operate as a "normal" party, by its own standards, a position it has often struggled with. After all, on the left-right scale it usually fell somewhere in the middle between the PvdA and the VVD, but by its own conception of its role it still opposed all major parties.

The interpretation of the party system as consisting of progressive and conservative parties led to shifting coalition preferences. The VVD, the other liberal player in the Dutch party system, was considered a conservative force; the PvdA a progressive one. The role of the CDA and its predecessors was more ambiguous, containing both progressive and conservative elements. Originally, the party hoped to entice progressive CDA supporters to support progressive realignment. However, the unity of the CDA after its merger in 1980 prevented this from happening.

The central negotiating position of the CDA was also becoming an increasingly important problem in the eyes of prominent Democrats.[59] The CDA and one of its predecessors, the Catholic People's Party (KVP), had never been excluded from any governing coalition since 1918 and D66 felt it was undesirable that the same minority would always be able

56. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 36.

57. Ibid., 387.

58. This was formulated by Van Mierlo himself quite clearly in his speech to the 1970 national congress in Breda: "As long as the electorate was being divided by dated ideological divisions by means of the threefold pattern of socialist, liberal and confessional somewhere in between, those voters who essentially agree on a number of solutions could not find eachother." Quoted in ibid., 67, translation by the author of this dissertation.

59. Ibid., 146.

to decide who to govern with. This was a problem in the field of democratisation and political reform but even more so in the field of medical ethics. In both fields, the party found the CDA blocking all proposals. The fact that this dominant position was brought on by the mutual exclusion of the PvdA and the VVD led D66 to the conclusion that it had to make a coalition without the CDA feasible (later termed the "Purple Coalition"). By 1981, D66 was participating in the Des Indes Conference, initiated by the youth wing of the VVD in the 70s, to see if a coalition without the CDA could be achieved.[60] This year also marked the first time the Purple Coalition of PvdA, VVD and D66 was named as a preferred option for D66 in a resolution of the national congress (if at this point second to CDA-PvdA-D66).

Finally, it should be noted that the other parties did not always take note of D66. The party's strategy resolutions briefly touched on above were originally intended to force other parties to clarify their coalition preferences prior to an election in a similar manner.[61] They did not, however, have the intended effect.[62] Rather, because they made the party's preferences public before the election, one could say the strategy resolutions disadvantaged D66, leading to the pyrrhic victory in which the party got its preferred coalition but was squeezed between the rival CDA and PvdA delegations in the short-lived second Van Agt Cabinet.

In conclusion, let us briefly discuss some expectations based on the proposition formulated in chapter three. According to proposition 6 on the effect of the electoral system, D66 should be pushed by the circumstances to take a reinforcement strategy. By the logic of this proposition, the Proportional Representation system promotes appealing to one's core vote, since the proportional system makes defections by core voters more effective. For this reason, mobilizing and reinforcing one's own core vote is expected to be the first priority for D66. However, due to the small size of D66's core vote, we should keep an eye out for signs that the proposition is too simple, since it might very well be the case that D66's atypically small core vote complicates the matter. We shall return to this in the conclusion of this chapter.

7.2.4 Overview and expectations

D66 presents a case where the party's internal characteristics contradict eachother, as can be seen in table 7.1. Since the party is slanted against any sort of privileged relationship with any group of voters, it has a weak electoral base attachment that, according to proposition 3, should lead to an extension strategy. At the same time, it is precisely this opposition to the existing mode of politics and the ideological basis of the main parties, as well as its fervent support for democratic reform, that gives the party a strong ideological attachment. This ideological attachment, according to proposition 4, should lead to a reinforcement strategy. Like as not, this will be a case where propositions

60. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 274.

61. M. Ten Brink, "betreft: Politieke Plaatsbepaling," Note to the national committee on political positioning dated 28th of November 1985 (1985), HB.DB-85/222A, inventory nr. 93, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

62. Ibid.

Table 7.1: Overview of the Independent Variables: D66 in 1982

Internal factors	**Measurement**	**Expected Strategy**
Electoral base attachment	Weak	Extension
Ideological attachment	Strong	Reinforcement
External environment		
Electoral system	Proportional Representation	Reinforcement
Previous election	Above average (+4,7%)	Extension

5a through 5c will come into play: during the first cycle, we can therefore expect that the tactical and organisational dimensions will show extension-based measures, whereas the programmatic dimension will see a reinforcement strategy highlighting the party's traditional values. If proposition 6 is correct, the second electoral cycle should see a more uniformly reinforcement strategy, owing to the dynamics of the PR system which encourages the cultivation of a party's core vote.

7.3 The 1982 General Election defeat

1981 had been a year of great triumph for D66. Under the leadership of Jan Terlouw, the party stormed ahead to a record seventeen seats in the lower house, over ten percent of the vote. This performance was 4,7% above average, as can be seen in the chart of electoral performance in figure 7.1, and the first performance in double figures at 11,1%.[63] Although some in the party had the sense that the party had overperformed and that part of this support was very soft, D66 was the great winner of the elections.[64] Perhaps as a result, the party got its then-preferred coalition of CDA, PvdA and D66. From the start, it was clear that this combination faced serious problems, not in the least because of the personal rivalry between former Prime Minister and PvdA leader Joop den Uyl and the sitting PM, CDA leader Dries van Agt.[65] Terlouw himself joined the Cabinet as second Deputy Prime Minister.

As one might expect, the Cabinet's term was fraught with problems, documented extensively in Terlouw's diaries among other sources.[66] The personal rivalry between Den Uyl and Van Agt never subsided, and to make things worse for Terlouw and D66, conflicts between Terlouw at Economic Affairs and Den Uyl at Social Affairs and Employment over financing a job creation package forced D66 to side against its former left-wing partner.[67] This conflict about the finances would ultimately bring down the Cabinet in the spring

63. Data obtained from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."

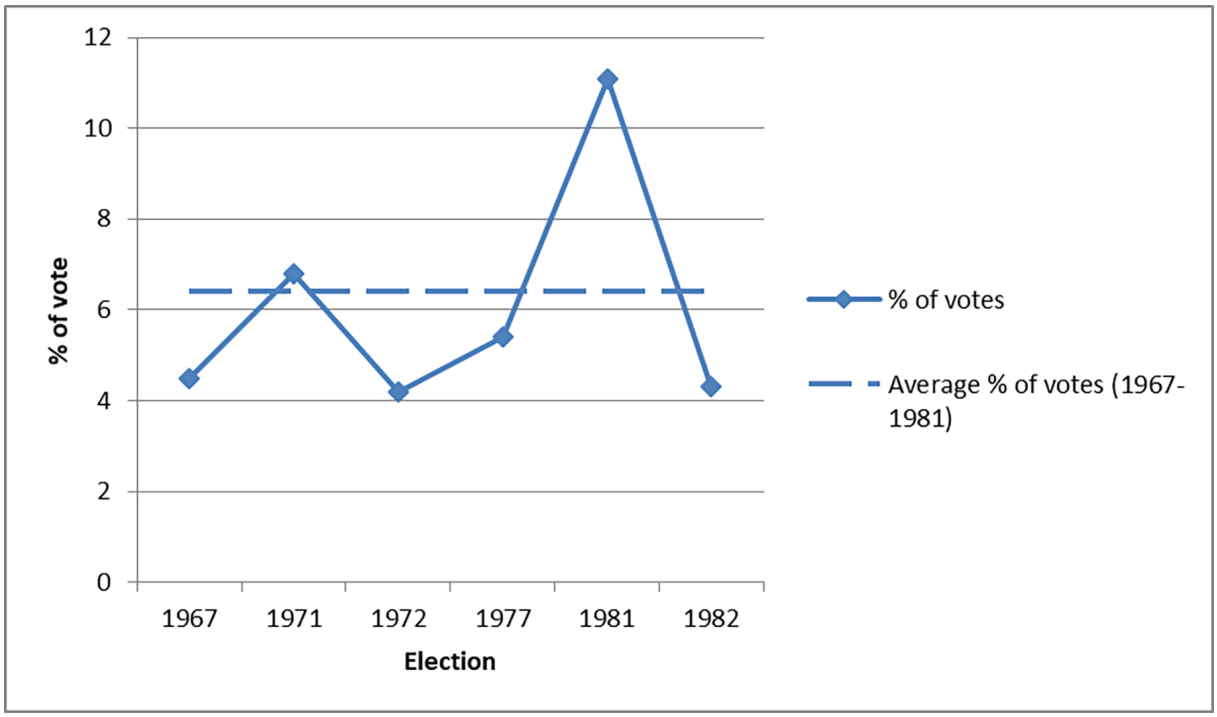
64. J. Glastra van Loon, "Toespraak Jan Glastra van Loon, voorzitter Eerste Kamerfractie D'66 op de ALV van D'66 op zaterdag, 30 oktober 1982 in "De Flint" te Amersfoort," Speech to the national congress of 29th and 30th October 1982 (1982), Congresstukken 82.10.30 JGl, inventory nr. 45, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 3.

65. See Terlouw, *Naar Zeventien Zetels en Terug*.

66. Terlouw, *Naar Zeventien Zetels en Terug*; Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 192.

67. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 194-195.

Figure 7.1: Electoral performance of D66, 1967-1982



of 1982.[68] In addition, relations between D66 Ministers and the Parliamentary Party soured because the former, according to the latter, neglected their ties to the party.[69] To compound the unrest, PvdA and D66 also suffered losses at the provincial elections. This particularly affected Terlouw, whose decision to remain in the rump cabinet of CDA and D66 formed following the resignation of the PvdA ministers from the Cabinet was criticised within the party. Four members of the Parliamentary Party voted against his decision.[70]

The downward spiral evident in the provincial election defeats continued in dramatic fashion for D66 at the early elections caused by the fall of its preferred cabinet in September 1982. Trouble surrounding Terlouw's leadership as a result of his decision to join the rump cabinet contributed to this defeat.[71] In the space of just a single year, the party had lost eleven of its seventeen seats in 1981, completely evaporating the gains made that year.[72] This is important, combined with the above-average performance of 1981, since the 1982 election only puts D66 at 2,1% below its average performance in the 5 elections up to and including 1982. This would mean that the party had lost primarily non-core voters. This squares with the party's knowledge that its loyal core vote was rather small.[73] In consequence, therefore, if the party were pursuing a functional strategy based on who defected in the shock election, it would pursue an extension strategy.

68. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 199.
69. Ibid., 195.
70. Ibid., 202.
71. R. A. Koole, "Het D'66-congres en de besluitvorming: Beschouwing bij en letterlijke teksten van de 33ste Algemene Ledenvergadering van D'66, 16 en 17 juli 1982 te Amersfoort," in *Jaarboek 1982*, ed. R. A. Koole and A. P. M. Lucardi (Groningen: Documentatiecentrum Politieke Partijen, 1983), 48.
72. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 213.
73. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 17.

The defeat was not only well over our 33% threshold, but also appears to have been traumatic for D66, as evidenced by the publication of a bundle of essays by party grandees edited by the parliamentary party leader's former aide Joris Backer and the speedy way in which the national committee took up the task of evaluating what had gone wrong.[74] The fact that the score of 1981 was most likely a temporary spike in performance did not detract from this sense of crisis. Nevertheless, unlike the 1974 crisis, there was no discussion of dissolving the party.[75] Terlouw announced that he would not be returning to Parliament and resigned his party leadership.[76]

7.4 The recovery strategy

Looking at D66's reaction to the 1982 defeat, what stands out is how quick the party was on the uptake. Soon after the defeat, an advisory group was convened by the national committee. This gathering, consisting of prominent party members, would help the executive prepare proposals for the October meeting of the national congress, just under two months away.[77] The draft resolutions produced by this brainstorming group contain the earliest forms of some parts of the recovery strategy, and will be brought up where necessary when discussing the various dimensions of the strategy below.[78] The fact that it was the congress for which the first actions were prepared shows the pre-eminence of the congress in the structure of the party.

The party was also surprisingly aware of its somewhat precarious position. The evaluation of the election result, authored by Acting Party Chairman and Political Deputy Chairman Bob van den Bos, shows a deep insight into the challenges facing the party. It presented the sobering conclusion that some of the party's most cherished traditions made it vulnerable. As noted above, D66's core electorate was small and the party did not want to endeavour for the automatic support of certain groups in society. As a corollary, it had little support in civil society. It had an aversion of party-political pointscoring and its open and participatory culture of decision-making often led to the appearance of indecision and lack of direction. These characteristics, Van den Bos concluded "are so deeply rooted in their essence in the party culture, that D66 (therefore) always runs the

74. J. Backer, *Tussen droom en daad: D'66 en de politieke crisis: meningen* (1983); Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," See section 7.4 for a more detailed discussion of the speed of the reaction.

75. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 228.

76. Terlouw, *Naar Zeventien Zetels en Terug*, 245.

77. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Notulen van verg. 82.09.24/25 H 26 te Soesterberg," Minutes of the Weekend Meeting of the National Committee, 24th and 25th of September 1982 at Soesterberg (1982), Bijlage B bij verg. 82.10.28 H 30, inventory nr. 54, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 5; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag Bijeenkomst Adviesgroep Congres op maandag 18 oktober 1982 om 19.30 uur," Minutes of the Advisory Group on the upcoming National Congress, 28th of October 1982 (1982), inventory nr. 54, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

78. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Congresboek B," Papers for the 34th National Congress (1982), inventory nr. 45, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

risk of destroying itself".[79]

Van den Bos's further analysis showed many similarities with the picture painted in section 7.2. D66, he argued, was more susceptible to the effects of the political business cycle, popularity of party leaders, party image, media climate and independent positioning than other parties at the time.[80] Concluding his analysis, Van den Bos recommended a mix of accepting the party's vulnerabilities and reinterpreting them to make them less so.[81] He argued that a balance must be struck between the harsh political realities and profiling the party as a modern progressive party.[82]

The Van den Bos evaluation and the brainstorming group proposals form the embryonic state of a strategy. It shows how deeply aware D66 was of the circumstances that brought it into crisis. Essentially, the choice Van den Bos paints mirrors the central thrust of the model: go down the familiar path advocating democratisation with new vigour or extend your appeal further, even at the cost of some of your party's essentials?

For D66, its ideological baggage would lead to a reinforcement strategy, since its ideas about democratisation were more or less its *raison d'être*. However, going on Van den Bos's analysis of the external realities, an extension strategy would be the logical choice, since the party remained vulnerable due to the lack of a large base of electoral support. Low base attachment should also contribute to this, since it caused the problems Van den Bos described. Here we have, once again, a test of various factors against eachother. In the section that follows, the recovery strategy shall be traced from the Van den Bos evaluation and the brainstorming group to 1986 and from that electoral recovery to 1989.

7.4.1 Towards different politics, 1982-1986

One thing should be noted before discussing the first electoral cycle following the 1982 electoral defeat. The response of the party shifts within this time period, perhaps more than it shifts between the first and second electoral cycles. Two stages can be distinguished within the first electoral cycle: a preliminary one under the leadership of Maarten Engwirda and a final one after the return of founding leader Hans van Mierlo to the leadership.[83] Interestingly, the former period contains more elements of the extension strategy than the latter. Van der Land uses exactly this point to mark a sharp transition: the end of the "Fourth Current" and the beginning of the return of the original democratisation agenda.[84]

The transition between Engwirda and Van Mierlo was tumultuous. With D66 at its nadir in the opinion polls at two seats in 1984, a year before the local elections of 1985, members and activists were getting disquieted over the parliamentary leadership of Engwirda, ultimately saying he lacked charisma.[85] Parliamentary party and national commit-

79. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 17, translation by the author.
80. Ibid., 18.
81. Ibid., 20.
82. Ibid., 21.
83. In a previous presentation of the preliminary results from this electoral cycle, these two phases were called the "initial" and "final" reactions.
84. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 239.
85. Ibid., 230.

tee had also been at odds.[86] Ultimately, the difficulties in the party led to speculation of Van Mierlo's return which became a self-fulfilling prophecy, as Engwirda came to believe only the former leader had what it took to revitalise the party and would only stand aside for him.[87] In the discussion that follows, the two periods will be identified as such where necessary to show the development of the recovery strategy within the first electoral cycle.

7.4.1.1 Organisational changes, 1982-1986

As noted above, D66 cherished its highly democratic party structure. From the documents of the brainstorming group and national committee, it appears there was no wish to change this. In fact, the brainstorming group proposed a resolution which would even further decentralise the party organisation.[88] This resolution was presented to the national congress by the national committee with a few changes.[89] Opposed to the national committee's drive to preserve the party's organisational basis, a group known as *(R)appèl*[90] which succeeded to capture the attention of the national committee and the party council, argued that a radical overhaul of the party organisation was necessary.[91] Despite the proposals to abolish the party council, the party council supported the manifesto presented by *(R)appèl*.[92] The national committee showed itself an essentially conservative force in debates on the party organisation, not just in responding to *(R)appèl* but also when the party council requested an extension of its advisory and controlling role.[93]

In a discussion note published in the party magazine *Democraat* by Deputy Chair for Organisation Mieke van Wagenberg, the national committee proposed measures mostly intended to streamline the party organisation. This was a followup of the resolution passed at the national congress in October 1982.[94] Among others, the role of the local branches in preparing and streamlining national congress discussions was further strengthened by delegating the power to bundle motions and amendments to the provincial branches.[95] The role of the Programme and Reporting Committees was also strengthened through proposals to change the *Huishoudelijk Reglement*.[96] All this would serve, according to Van

86. Ibid., 229-230.

87. Ibid., 240.

88. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Resolutie Organisatie," Draft resolution on the organization as proposed by the brainstorming group (1982), inventory nr. 45, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

89. D66, National Committee, "Congresboek B," 6.

90. The name is hard to translate - it is essentially a play on the "appeal", the manifesto published by the founders through which they tried to gauge support for their idea of a new party. The addition of "(R)" to the name signifies a renewal of this appeal.

91. (R)Appèl Group, "Over fundament en partijcentrum," *Democraat* 17, no. 6 (1982): 204-205; Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*.

92. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 205.

93. O. Scheltema, "betreft: Motie AR d.d. 31/5/86 over taakuitbreiding," Note to the national committee on the party council motion of 31/5/86 for extension of their tasks (1986), HB.DB-86/082, inventory nr. 96, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

94. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Voorstellen ter verbetering van de organisatie van de partij," *Democraat* 16, no. 1 (1983): 17.

95. Ibid.

96. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Voorstellen tot wijziging van enige artikelen van het Huishoudelijk Reglement," *Democraat* 16, no. 1 (1983): 8, 17.

Wagenberg's note, to reduce the number of motions and amendments to be debated at the national congress and increase the quality of decision-making.[97] In light of reflections by Koole on the ways the national committee and party leadership could mould the deliberations of the national congress, one has to conclude that this would add another tool to their arsenal.[98] In relation to the organisational dimension of the recovery strategy, therefore, these relatively minor changes still provide evidence of mild concentration of power in the hands of the executive, or internal de-democratisation.

Another change to the democratic procedures of the party concerned a major function of parties: nominating candidates. Prior to 1982 the party simply conducted a postal ranked ballot without any sort of structured process to ensure balance of the list. There was no draft list on which the members would pronounce their verdict; rather they got a list of all candidates introducing themselves and would then vote. According to Hillebrand, this gave the members a large amount of control, at the cost of introducing a large risk of unbalanced results due to lack of coordination.[99] Starting in 1982, the national committee seems to have seen this as a problem, and instituted a committee (*Commissie Kandidaatstelling*, candidate selection committee) to review the procedures.

This committee came up with far-reaching proposals to enable the national committee to give advice to the membership in selection procedures. The national committee appeared rather conflicted about these proposed new powers.[100] After delaying the proposals to study them further, the national committee proposed enabling it to give a recommendation.[101] A special national congress in Biddinghuizen agreed but made the recommendation optional, at the discretion of the national committee or the national congress.[102] Under the system as it first operated before the 1986 elections, the national committee appointed a committee, which based on a profile would single out fifteen candidates, without any further order among them, for recommendation.[103] Like the changes to procedures for the national congress, this change is relevant because it eases coordination by the party's central decision-makers, at the cost of direct membership influence.

Despite not changing the fundamental OMOV premise of the selection procedures, it remained contentious. When the national congress first debated a request for advice, the national committee advised against it.[104] According to campaign coordinator Michiel ten

97. D66, National Committee, "Voorstellen ter verbetering van de organisatie van de partij," 17.
98. Koole, "Het D'66-congres en de besluitvorming," 53-54.
99. Hillebrand, *De Antichambre van het Parlement*, 123.
100. M. Van Wagenberg, "Stand van zaken met betrekking tot onderzoek naar de kandidaatstellingsprocedure," *Democraat* 16, no. 1 (1983): 17.
101. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Beleidsvoorstellen Organisatie," *Democraat* 16, no. 6 (1983): 19.
102. D66, National Committee, "Congresboek B," amendment 5010, p.5; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Besluitvorming rond beleidsvoorstellen organisatie," *Democraat* 17, no. 3 (1984): 6; implemented in Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement," 1986, accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9514`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
103. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Stemadvies Tweede Kamer," *Democraat* 18, no. 8 (1985): 8.
104. Democraten 66, "Congres vraagt HB om stemadvies," *Democraat* 18, no. 7 (1985): 21; Democraten 66, National Congress, "Congresboek," Papers of the National Congress held 15th and 16th June 1985 (1985), inventory nr. 63, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, motion APM 1050, p. 38.

Brink, the voting advice was designed more for local elections in which media information on the candidates was less readily available. On the national level, he argued, the benefits failed to outweigh the concerns about what this might mean for the party's internally democratic structure.[105] The first use of the innovation was therefore against the wishes of the national committee, showing again the hesitation with which changes to the party structure were treated.

D66 can be said to have pursued an extension strategy in its organisation due to the way the measures ease coordination and concentrate power ever so slightly more into the hands of the national committee and other national organs. Even if the democratic rules of the game were not changed, the increased opportunities to influence the OMOV decision-making procedures qualified the power of ordinary members. This, in turn, enabled the leadership to act more independently of the membership. Regardless, the hesitation with which it approached this and the lack of the proposals in the early documents reveal that this might have been more a matter of necessity for the national committee, shaped by the interventions of members and the national congress, rather than an agenda intended from the start. The harsh external realities were in direct contest with the internal democratic preferences of the party and its members. This led to a compromise in which minor concessions were made to the demands of the external environment.

7.4.1.2 Programmatic changes, 1983-1987: Different politics

According to the Van den Bos evaluation, the major imperative for D66 in 1982 in the field of programme was the clarity of the programme and its independence from the major parties.[106] It remained to be seen, however, whether this clarity would be found in the party's traditional radical democratic agenda or in an increasing focus on the social liberalism of the Terlouw years. Associated as Van Mierlo was with the party's founding themes, it should come as no surprise that his return to the stage clearly separates the programmatic response into two sub-periods. Before Van Mierlo returned, there were considerable indications that the party intended to search for clarity in broadening and redefining its programmatic basis,[107] whereas the return of the founding leader heralded a return to a strong democratisation theme.

Van den Bos clearly expressed that on balance, the party was "left-liberal" in his eyes.[108] In doing so, he arguably reopened a perennial discussion in the party's history. On the one hand, the party put itself in the tradition of the pre-war VDB.[109] On the other, it had a distaste of rigid 'ideological' party systems. This split the party into two camps.

105. M. Ten Brink, "betreft: stemadvies HB m.b.t. kandidatenlijst Tweede Kamer Verkiezingen," Memo to the National Executive regarding the voting advice of the national committee for the list of lower house candidates, dated 3th of October 1984 (1984), HB.DB-84/209, inventory nr. 82, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

106. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 18.

107. For instance, the Van den Bos evaluation proposes to create new points to profile the party on: ibid.

108. Ibid., 21.

109. For example referenced in J. Kohnstamm, "Rede Jacob Kohnstamm, partijvoorzitter, op het 35ste congres van D'66 in Zutphen op 7 mei 1983," Speech to the 35th National Congress (1983), inventory nr. 46, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

Interestingly, we can follow their discourse in a series of *Democraat* articles. One camp, led by 1982 campaign manager Jan Veldhuizen, got the national congress to call for reopening the debate and argued that the party had to add a descriptive subtitle to its name declaring it a "social-liberal" or "left-liberal" party for the sake of clarity.[110] The other opposed the change, mostly on the grounds that "social-liberal" did not fully describe D66 and that it ran contrary to the non-ideological tradition of the party.[111] In the end, a resolution tabled by Veldhuizen et al. to label the party "left-liberal" failed in the national congress after the national committee opposed it on the grounds that it would leave the party less able to accommodate people of diverse views.[112] This defeat can be seen as a first indication of the strength of the opposition to playing up a specific ideological label, which many felt would be too rigid, and in this regard presages the return to a more radical democratic course under Van Mierlo.

More importantly, the party started a plan to thoroughly revise its programme. This was originally a two-part plan.[113] The first part was the so-called Democratic Manifesto (DM) by Aad Nuis, which was based among others on a paper produced earlier by senator Jan Vis for the brainstorming group.[114] The Democratic Manifesto would analyse social trends and offer a general D66 take on them, to act as the introduction to the next manifesto and offer direction to the revised political programme.[115] It seemed to reinterpret and broaden the party's idea of democratisation in many respects, focusing on democratisation in all aspects of society while reducing the founding concern with political reform to a single paragraph.[116] A similar emphasis appears in Engwirda's address to the national

110. Democraten 66, National Congress, "Verslag van de 35e Algemene Ledenvergadering, gehouden op 6 en 7 mei 1983 in de Hanzehof te Zutphen," Minutes (*Verslag*) of the 35th National Congress of D66 (1983), inventory nr. 46, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 31-32; J. Veldhuizen, "Democraten '66: Een Liberale Partij," *Democraat* 16, no. 4 (1983): 11–13; J. Jorritsma, J. Boogerd, and P. Scheele, "Links Liberaal, Geen Garantie, Wel Duidelijk!," *Democraat* 16, no. 5 (1983): 3–4; B. Van den Bos, "De ondertiteling in discussie, voor en tegen links-liberaal," *Democraat* 16, no. 5 (1983): 6; J. Veldhuizen, "Aanduiding D'66," *Democraat* 16, no. 6 (1983): 5; B. Van Dijk, "D'66 al veertig jaar een sociaal-liberale partij," *Democraat* 16, no. 6 (1983): 6, p. 31-32.

111. S. Schaap, "Liberale Partij: een Mislukt Discussiestuk," *Democraat* 16, no. 5 (1983): 5; Van den Bos, "De ondertiteling in discussie, voor en tegen links-liberaal"; Democraten 66, North Brabant Provincial States Group, "Wat bezielt ons nu toch?," *Democraat* 16, no. 6 (1983): 3; H.P.M. Strijers, "Geen ondertitel uit de vorige eeuw," *Democraat* 16, no. 6 (1983): 4–5.

112. Veldhuizen, J. *cum suis*, "Resolutie partij-aanduiding," Resolution on a party label, submitted to the National Congress at Biddinghuizern, January 1984, *Democraat* 16, no. 6 (1983): 18; Democraten 66, National Congress, "Verslag van de 37e Algemene Ledenvergadering, gehouden op 21 januari 1984 in de Flevohof te Biddinghuizen," Minutes of the 37th National Congress of D66, held Saturday 21st of January 1984 at Biddinghuizen (1984), inventory nr. 57, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 8-16.

113. M. Ten Brink, "betreft: politiek-programmatische planning," Memo to the National Executive on political-programmatic planning, dated 24th of November 1982 (1982), HB.DB 82/76, inventory nr. 55, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

114. J. Vis, "Behoud en ontwikkeling van de humane samenleving: Een sociaal-liberale visie," Found in the papers of the advisory group on the national congress (1982), inventory nr. 45, 66, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

115. Ten Brink, "betreft: politiek-programmatische planning."

116. A. Nuis, "Het Democratisch Manifest: een nieuw hoofdstuk: de plaats van D'66 in 1983," *Democraat* 16, no. 1 (1983): 9–16.

congress discussing the document.[117] The congress adopted the document as requested, with amendments to the text itself having been ruled out.[118] In addition, the national committee presented policy proposals on newer issues like informatics and topical areas like labour policy to the national congress in what appears to have been an attempt to broaden the programme.[119]

The second phase would be a total revision of the party's programme based on the DM, although in the end it became more of a collection of already passed policies than a fundamentally new document.[120] Meanwhile, Engwirda, whose leadership was coming under fire, tried to formulate his own priorities. He declared democratisation the party's top priority, in a broader interpretation similar to the DM's, but the final version of his strategy paper focuses on the economy before discussing this priority.[121] In this way, the early period of programmatic reform seemed to favour an extension strategy as the party sought primarily to capitalise on new and topical issues while at the same time trying to redefine its traditional values to broaden the concept of democratisation.

This changed with the return of Van Mierlo. The early elections planned for 1986 and the return of the old party leader interrupted the revision of the new policy programme, which could not be completed and discussion of which was in part delegated to the new manifesto.[122] The DM, in fact, never became the intended prologue to the manifesto of 1986. Instead, the manifesto was based heavily on *Een Reden van Bestaan* (a reason to exist), a "political message" prepared by the Senate parliamentary party under Van Mierlo's chairmanship.[123] In fact, some passages of the manifesto cite the message verbatim.[124] In contrast to the DM, *Een Reden van Bestaan* very much put political reform front and centre once more. The party then shifted rapidly to accommodate the more traditional concerns of its former leader. Party Secretary Maarten ten Brink urged public speakers on behalf of the party to keep emphasising "labour and informatics, environment and individualisation", adding two issues that the party had come to view as characteristic

117. M. Engwirda, "Toespraak Maarten Engwirda, fractievoorzitter D'66, voor de Algemene Ledenvergadering van D'66, 'de Hanzehof', Zutphen, 7 mei 1983.," Speech to the 35th National Congress of D66 at Zutphen. (1983), inventory nr. 46, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

118. Democraten 66, National Committee, "HB-Resolutie I" (1983), In *Papers for the 35th National Congress of D66, held at Zutphen on 6 and 7 May 1983*. Attached to *Democraat* 16(2).

119. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Beleidshoofdstuk Informatiebeleid," *Democraat* 15, no. 8 (1982): 17–18; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Adelt arbeid? Een visie op de plaats van arbeid in een tijd van grote werkloosheid" (1984), Attachment to *Democraat* 17(2).

120. Ten Brink, "betreft: politiek-programmatische planning"; K. Klompenhouwer, "Een nieuw Beleidsprogramma voor D'66: 'Warmdraaien voor de ring van '86.'", *Democraat* 18, nummer 1 (1985): 7.

121. M. Engwirda, "D66-prioriteiten voor de toekomst, een actieplan voor de komende jaren.," Dated april 1984. (1984), HB.DB-84/130, inventory nr. 80, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 7.

122. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Beleidsprogramma," Announcement on the Policy Programme., *Democraat* 18, no. 7 (1985): the National Committee would later retract their proposed decisions at the January 1986 National Congress and propose that the Policy Programme be amended in line with the 1986 Manifesto.

123. Democraten 66, "Een Reden van Bestaan" (1985), Consulted at the Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

124. Democraten 66, "Verkiezingsprogramma 1986/1990," 1986, accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/274`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

of D66 (environment and individualisation) associated with respectively Terlouw and Van Mierlo to the list of policy priorities.[125]

The programmatic developments between 1982 and 1986 combine elements of the reinforcement and extension strategies by seeking to reinterpret its democratisation agenda in a broader way, but with Van Mierlo's return, emphasis shifted to the party's traditional values, as evidenced by the main slogan "Different Politics" (*Andere Politiek*).[126] The information and labour policies certainly remained important parts of the party's messaging. However, a renewed focus on political democratisation is clear from the manifesto and the qualitative archival evidence. In 1986, the party moved to support the institution of an advisory referendum for the first time in its existence, not only reaffirming but deepening its founding commitments.[127] In this way, the reinforcement strategy came to predominate as the character of the party reasserted itself, with a focus now on highlighting political reform as D66's "reason to exist". In the words of the 1986 campaign plan, the party was now confident that "[its] line is old and good".[128]

7.4.1.3 Tactical Changes, 1982-1986: same votes as before

Prior to 1982, D66 had seemed on the way to becoming a social-liberal "fourth ideological current", complementing the social democratic, Christian democratic and liberal currents. It actively sought and claimed this position under Terlouw. However, as the Van den Bos evaluation reveals, it did not succeed. One of the problems for the party, the Deputy Chairman signaled, was that the PvdA and the VVD had moved to the centre, squeezing D66 in between them.[129] According to Van den Bos, the party should focus on younger VVD voters and disaffected Labour voters, as well as younger CDA supporters.[130]

The general thrust of the party's targeting strategy seems to have been slanted against opportunistically angling for as many votes as possible. This was aptly summarized by a member of the brainstorming group: "we shouldn't be looking 'which constituencies are still left over for us?'"[131] Van den Bos, in his analysis, concurred that the targeting

125. M. Ten Brink, "betreft: concept-sprekers - A 4," Memo to the members of the Campaign Preparations Committee (*Campagnevoorbereidingscommissie*) dated 22nd of October 1984 (1984), inventory nr. 62, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

126. Democraten 66, "Andere Politiek," Poster for the 1986 election campaign found in the DNPP poster collection, 1986, accessed January 14, 2018, `http://facsimile.ub.rug.nl/cdm/ref/collection/DNPPaffiches/id/1551`.

127. Democraten 66, "D66 is voor landelijk referendum," Press Release on the new referendum policy dated 24th of January 1986 (1986), inventory nr. 66, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

128. M. Ten Brink, "Campagneplan 1986: Concept Campagneplan 1986 t.b.v. Gemeenteraads- en Tweede Kamerverkiezingen, oktober 1985," Draft Campaign Plan for 1986 (1985), HB.DB-85/196A, inventory nr. 92, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 8.

129. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 20.

130. Ibid., 21.

131. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag Bijeenkomst "Aanzet Partijdiskussie Politiek" op maandag 4 oktober 1982," Minutes of the Advisory Group, 4th of October 1982 (1982), inventory nr. 45, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 3.

strategy should "derive from our proposed direction".[132] Discussing the priorities of the national committee, chairman Jacob Kohnstamm also argued: "we should not be conducting interest group-ish politics."[133]

The impression that this puts the party in the reinforcement column is further strengthened by a note on the 1986 campaign plan prepared by publicity coordinator Gauke Tanja: "our voters will have to come from the same corner as before."[134] The party, he argued, should not focus on having a finger in all pies, but rather focus on well-defined target groups and areas. Various documents before this already gave a definition of this target group as being predominantly young (up to 30 or 35 years) and/or of a slightly above-average education and income level.[135] Significantly, the reinforcing intent was made explicit by Kohnstamm in response to a complaint by Van den Bos during a national committee meeting that this targeting would be "elitist". The party chairman reasoned in response that D66 had to build an electoral base first, and that making it less elitist would only be possible after this had been accomplished.[136]

To do so, the party had to position itself in opposition to the other parties. Clear points of policy should be given preference. This seemed to play right into the programmatic part of the reinforcement strategy with the return of Van Mierlo, marking a shift from the fourth current strategy to a new form of the explosion theory, in his words: "Everyone may run in currents to their heart's content, so long as they acknowledge the dual role [of D66 opposed to and among the other parties]."[137]

Significantly, the national committee discontinued the use of the strategy resolution,

132. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 21.

133. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Hoofdbestuur en de TK-fractie dd 23 en 24 september 1983 in Hydepark te Doorn," Minutes of the Meeting of the National Committee and Lower House Parliamentary Party held on 23rd and 24th September 1983 (1983), HB.DB-83/465, inventory nr. 68, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 5, original text: *"Wij moeten niet aan belangengroepachtige politiek gaan doen."*

134. G. Tanja, "Eerste (schriftelijke) poging tot campagne-denken," Memo on campaign thought titled "first (written) attempt at campaign thought" (1985), inventory nr. 87, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 2.

135. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Hoofdbestuur en de TK-fractie dd 23 en 24 september 1983 in Hydepark te Doorn," 5; K. Van den Brink, "betreft: voorstel doelgroepenkeuze campagne," Note to the European Elections Campaign Committee (C.C.E.P.) on the proposed targeting for the campaign dated 23rd of March 1984 (1984), HB.DB-84/87, inventory nr. 77, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; R. Heskamp, Untitled letter to campaign coordinators on the 1984 European elections, dated 14th of May 1984 (1984), inventory nr. 79, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 4.

136. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Hoofdbestuur, gehouden op vrijdag 16 en zaterdag 17 december 1983 in Kapellerput te Heeze," Minutes of the National Committee Meeting held 16th and 17th December 1983 (1984), HB.DB-84/12, inventory nr. 75, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 2.

137. H. A. F. M. O. Van Mierlo, "Bijdrage van mr. Hans van Mierlo aan het congres van D66 te Breda, 30 november 1985," Speech to the November 1985 National Congress (1985), inventory nr. 65, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, original text: *"Iedereen stroomt zich maar suf, zolang-ie het maar doet met erkenning van de dualiteit."*

possibly because of the negative experience of the 1981-1982 coalition, another idea originating in Van den Bos's evaluation.[138] Instead, they offered a "strategic positioning" which more or less stated that D66 would only participate in government if they were able to realise enough of their programme.[139] This move away from strategy to results can also be seen in the attitude to the Des Indes talks with Labour and the VVD, when Van den Bos wondered whether it would not be better to abandon them.[140] In the end, the national committee decided to continue D66's participation on the condition that there be concrete results.[141]

The party also made significant effort to capture the youth vote. The campaign plan also mentions the elderly and migrant votes as candidates for "special attention", but the youth vote was very clearly targeted.[142] This is not so strange in light of the fact, noted above, that the existing core electorate of D66 was perceived as under 35 years old. Van den Bos continued his advocacy for targeting young people, and proved a major force in this area. Among others, he forcefully argued the transformation of the party's internal Young People Activation Centre (*Jongeren Activeringscentrum*, JOAC) into a full-fledged independent youth wing.[143] Early calls by members of JOAC and the party to do something about the position of young people in the party explicitly mentioned the need to win the youth vote back.[144] The national committee and parliamentary party embraced this reasoning.[145] Despite serious discussion revealing the resistance of D66 to such a sub-group in the party, the national congress expressed its support for the plan and as a consequence, the Young Democrats (*Jonge Democraten*, JD) were founded as an "independent" youth organization, organizationally separate from the party but aligned

138. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 21.
139. Ten Brink, "betreft: Politieke Plaatsbepaling."
140. B. Van den Bos, "betreft: Korte Notitie Des-Indesberaad (ter discussie)," Short note to the National Committee on the Des Indes talks dated 3rd of November 1985 (1985), HB.DB-85/208, inventory nr. 93, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
141. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Hoofdbestuur, gehouden op donderdag 19 december 1985 in de Jaarbeurs te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee meeting held 19th of December 1985 (1986), HB.DB-86/001, inventory nr. 95, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 4.
142. Ten Brink, "Campagneplan 1986," 14.
143. B. Van den Bos, "Een nieuwe jongerenorganisatie: hard nodig!," *Democraat* 16, no. 5 (1983): 7–8.
144. P. Van Eijk, F. Spijkers, and R. van der Steeg, "Wie geen jeugd heeft, heeft geen toekomst" (1983), inventory nr. 63, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1.
145. B. Van den Bos, "betreft: Jongerenbeleid D'66/JOAC," Memo to the National Committee on youth policy and JOAC dated 16th of May 1983 (1983), inventory nr. 63, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; L. Groenman and E. Nypels, "Betreft: JOAC," Letter from the Parliamentary Party in the Lower House to the National Committee and Party Council regarding JOAC, dated 31st of May 1983 (1983), HB.DB-83/318, inventory nr. 64, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van het Hoofdbestuursweekend, gehouden op 24 en 25 juli 1983 in Hydepark te Doorn," Minutes of the Weekend Meeting of the National Committee held 24th and 25th of July 1983 (1983), HB.DB-83/383, inventory nr. 66, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 6.

with it.[146] During the campaign, this targeting of the youth vote continued with a well-received speech campaign by Van Mierlo in the university towns.[147]

A final change that should be mentioned is the party's new logo and a slight change of its name. In the new logo, the apostrophe that hitherto indicated the reference to the name 1966 (rendering the party acronym as D'66) disappeared. The announcement in Democraat confirms that the party saw the reference as dated: "in the new logo, 66 no longer refers to 1966".[148] Apart from this new outlook, however, there did not appear to be much political targeting content to the minor logo change, and it can therefore be regarded as neutral to the direction of the tactical changes.

The party also did not attempt to attract a different kind of candidate. As a relatively successful new party, D66 was naturally very concerned with the loyalty of their candidates to the party.[149] In the 1985 version of the statutes, the minimum required length of a candidate's membership prior to an election was lengthened from six months to a year, further tilting the balance towards insider candidates.[150] Additionally, of the 15 candidates recommended by the voting advice committee, a majority had prior experience in parliament or on the national executive.[151] This was the case most of all for Van Mierlo himself, of course, who had a prominent history in the party and transferred from the Senate to the lower house with the 1986 elections. Hillebrand also noted the influence of the first Voting Advice, this tilted the balance slightly towards insiders.[152] Therefore, on balance, the personal part of the recovery strategy, can be seen as leaning in the reinforcement direction.

All this adds up to a clear strategy reinforcing the party's traditional targeting strategy, and therefore belonging to the reinforcement strategy, which seems clearly related to the traditional antipathy of the party against appealing to sectional interests and against the existing party system. The party wanted to build on those it already appealed to through its programme, and go from there. With the exception of the foundation of the JD and the intention to target migrant and elderly voters, D66 seemed to plan to adopt its traditional positioning between PvdA and VVD, attracting disaffected voters from both parties as it used to. The subtle disavowal of the concept of a strategy resolution aided the party in profiling itself without any reference to the other parties, further reinforcing the distinct positioning strategy.

146. D66, National Congress, "Verslag van de 37e Algemene Ledenvergadering, gehouden op 21 januari 1984 in de Flevohof te Biddinghuizen," 6-7.

147. Democraten 66, National Executive, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Dagelijks Bestuur, gehouden op dinsdag 8 april te Den Haag," Minutes of the meeting of the National Executive held 8th of April 1986 (1986), HB.DB-86/0072, inventory nr. 96, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1; M. Ten Brink, "betreft: stand van zaken campagne," Memorandum on the state of affairs in the campaign. (1986), inventory nr. 96, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 2.

148. Democraten 66, "Nieuw Logo," *Democraat* 18, no. 5 (1985): 8.

149. Koole, *De Opkomst van de Moderne Kaderpartij*, 244.

150. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1985, art. 19.2. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9513`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

151. D66, National Committee, "Stemadvies Tweede Kamer."

152. Hillebrand, *De Antichambre van het Parlement*, 130.

7.4.2 Consolidation, 1986-1989

The 1986 general election proved a success for D66. Under the renewed leadership of the charismatic Van Mierlo, the party increased its number of seats from six to nine. Although the pollsters predicted a larger victory for the party, the official evaluation report authored by campaign manager Michiel ten Brink noted that under the circumstances of the previous electoral cycle, the gains were more than satisfactory.[153] This thread of thought was visible earlier than the release of the report, almost a year after the elections – from the first evaluation in a meeting of parliamentary party and national committee, decision-makers in the party appear to have been proud of the progress made first and foremost.[154]

That is not to say there were no concerns. Apparently, the national committee still entertained a slumbering discontent about the state of the party organisation. A major concern aired in evaluations was the existence of blind spots where there was no local branch and what to do with these areas.[155]

More generally, the party's strategic thinking remained very much in line with what Van den Bos had written in 1982, and the party seemed deeply aware that its vulnerabilities had not entirely been dealt with. Van Mierlo had proved an indisputably popular choice for the leadership, but there seems to have been some concern about what came after.[156] Similarly, the concern with keeping the growth of D66 steady and the related discussions on targeting also resurfaced. Finally, there was a considerable amount of concern that the PvdA and the CDA had conspired to shut out D66 from important campaign events and that they were forming a Cabinet without D66 participation, even though the party's own voters were assumed on the basis of polls to favour such participation.[157]

Nevertheless, all these concerns generally colour within the lines which were broadly drawn in the preceding electoral cycle. Regardless of all the insecurities, the party seemed keen to stick to what had worked. Interestingly, the roles in this period became reversed between the party in and out of office. Where in the previous period, Van Mierlo had insisted on a sharper and more traditional profile, now we find references in the archives where Van Mierlo indicated the parliamentary group did not want an even clearer party identity, even though members of the national committee kept pushing it, instead prefer-

153. M. Ten Brink, "D66 Verkiezingscampagne 1986. Evaluatie en Aanbevelingen," Evaluation Report on the 1986 election campaign (1987), HB.DB-87/061, inventory nr. 104, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 8.

154. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," Minutes of the Weekend Meeting of the Parliamentary Party and the National Committee held 13rd and 14th of June 1986 (1986), HB.DB-86/116, inventory nr. 98, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

155. Ten Brink, "D66 Verkiezingscampagne 1986. Evaluatie en Aanbevelingen," 17; D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 2.

156. Democraten 66, National Executive, "Notulen DB-vergadering d.d. 17- november 1987," Minutes of the Meeting of the National Executive, 17th of November 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/209, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 30.

157. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 3; Ten Brink, "D66 Verkiezingscampagne 1986. Evaluatie en Aanbevelingen," 2.

ring a clearer prioritisation between issues.[158]

7.4.2.1 Organisational changes, 1986-1989

Interestingly, the experience with the ad hoc organisation of the party during the election campaigns seems to have resulted in a shift of opinion on the national committee. There was still a conservative bend to many of the discussions, but in the second electoral cycle the general membership played this role. As a result of the election evaluation, the national committee appointed a committee led by former Nijmegen alderman Wim Vrijhoef to advise on a re-structuring of the party.[159] Among others, a central concern was the dissatisfaction with the way in which the national congress functioned, which was still deemed unsatisfactory by the national committee.[160]

The central proposal of the Vrijhoef committee would be to delegate some tasks from the national congress to other organs. The national committee and executive would get some of the organisational tasks, while a new party council based on membership representation would take charge of the political preparation of congress decisions.[161] This arrangement mirrors that of other political parties. This is particularly significant since it would significantly reduce levels of direct democracy within the party. This would give the cadre of the party more leeway and thus form part of an extension strategy. The national committee, which had previously rebuffed attempts by the existing advisory council to become such a party council, appeared broadly supportive of the idea at first. However, after the report was circulated the regional members of the national committee in particular proved very critical. This was largely due to discontent about not being consulted about proposals that included the abolition of their positions on the national committee. The rest of the national committee appeared to have been slightly taken aback by this.[162] The party's standing political programme would also be abolished and replaced by the manifesto plus policy documents determined during the cycle, as had practically been done in 1986.[163]

The Vrijhoef proposals never made it to practice. When they were released in the party magazine in September 1987, they encountered heavy resistance among the membership. The party council, in a heated meeting, seemed concerned (among others) that it did not get the expansion of advisory competences it had asked for – ironically, since this

158. Democraten 66, National Executive, "Notulen DB van 7-4-1987," Minutes of the meeting of the National Executive held 7th of April 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/084, inventory nr. 105, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1.

159. Democraten 66, Vrijhoef Committee, "Advies van de Adviesgroep Partijstructuren," *Democraat* 20, no. 7 (1987): 9.

160. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Partijstructuur onder de loep," *Democraat* 20, no. 7 (1987): 9.

161. D66, Vrijhoef Committee, "Advies van de Adviesgroep Partijstructuren," 10-11.

162. B. Van den Bos, "Partijorganisatie moet worden vernieuwd," *Democraat* 20, no. 8 (1987): 2; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van de Fractie-HB-dag," Minutes of the Meeting of the National Committee and Parliamentary Party held 21st of November 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/209, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 31-34.

163. D66, Vrijhoef Committee, "Advies van de Adviesgroep Partijstructuren," 11.

was what Vrijhoef intended.[164] In addition, it successfully called for decision-making to be deferred to the autumn national congress.[165] In January, the national committee gave the national congress two clear options – either implement changes or change nothing.[166] Although an internal document noted the diversity and quality of the reactions as the reason,[167] the memo by the national committee published in Democraat implied heavily that the reactions were generally opposed to the proposals, distinguishing a group inimitably opposed to the whole idea of an overhaul and a group that objected to part of the Vrijhoef proposals.[168] The party council advised not to change the structure.[169] In the end, the national committee concluded that a change to the party structure was not the preferred option of the national congress and prepared minor changes to procedures instead.[170]

The national committee appears, in addition, to have entertained the thought of polling the members on political issues. In a proposal by Scheltema, these polls could be focused at prioritising issues and evaluating the manifesto policy-wise.[171] It was also raised at the national congress where the Vrijhoef proposals were discussed.[172] It is significant that discussions like this one were held in the context of a membership drive.[173] In addition, this mobilising role of intra-party democracy was clearly linked to the reasoning, as evidenced by the fact that members of the executive were wary to be seen to use such polls as a lure on new members, that giving more power to members encourages more people to become members.[174] The proposals did not, in the end, make it into practice.

164. H. Bleumink, "Adviesraad," *Democraat* 20, no. 10 (1987): 5.
165. H. Frentz, Untitled letter to the members of the party council, dated 22nd of November 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/203, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
166. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Discussie partijstructuren," *Democraat* 21, no. 1 (1988): 2–3; Th. De Graaf, "Concept Thom de Graaf d.d. 23 – 12 – 1987," Draft of the memo on the party structure discussion dated 23rd of December 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/216, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
167. S. Van der Loo, H. Kernkamp, and Th. De Graaf, "betreft: procedure behandeling rapport adviesgroep partijstructuren," Memo on the procedure for consideration of the Vrijhoef Report dated 12th of December 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/212, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
168. D66, National Committee, "Discussie partijstructuren."
169. Bleumink, "Adviesraad."
170. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Notulen HB-vergadering d.d. 25 februari 1988," Minutes of the Meeting of the National Committee held 25th of February 1988 (1988), HB.DB-88/042, inventory nr. 109, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 3-4.
171. O. Scheltema, "Onderwerp: Enkele voorbeelden voor mogelijk te houden opiniepeilingen onder de D66-leden (mede in relatie tot de ledenwerfactie)," Memo to the National Executive with some examples of possible polls among members of D66 (1987), HB.DB-87/171, inventory nr. 107, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1-2.
172. H. Kernkamp, "betreft: Procedure inzake 'Partijstructuren' n.a.v. ALV 6 februari 1988," Memo to the National Committee on the procedure for the Vrijhoef proposals (1988), HB.DB-88/031, inventory nr. 109, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1.
173. Scheltema, "Onderwerp: Enkele voorbeelden voor mogelijk te houden opiniepeilingen onder de D66-leden (mede in relatie tot de ledenwerfactie)," 1-2.
174. Ibid.

What can be seen from the above discussion is that as a result of the continuing dissatisfaction with the current functioning of party organs, D66 felt the need to pursue internal de-democratisation in the form of a move away from OMOV and therefore away from the membership, showing an extending tendency. However, the resistance encountered by the Vrijhoef proposals meant that not much changed and organisational efforts remained largely confined to tweaking the changes introduced previously. The character of the party and its conception as a unique experiment in direct democracy will no doubt have contributed to this outcome.

7.4.2.2 Programmatic changes, 1986-1989

By 1986, D66 had reclaimed its old role of challenger to the existing party system under the leadership of Van Mierlo. The party itself remained identified to the electorate with a left-liberal positioning, according to a report by executive member Kees van den Brink.[175] In large part, from a party with D66's characteristics and the relative success of the 1986 campaign, one would not expect very large changes to the party's course.

Indeed, most of what D66 did programmatically between 1986 and 1989 seemed to lean that way. In a broad treatment of the party's course at a national committee-parliamentary party weekend in 1986, the consensus appeared above all to continue on the current path.[176] The slogan "different politics" had struck a chord not just with the electorate, but even moreso with the party faithful, although some, including Van Mierlo, doubted whether the theme would carry the party much further.[177] The watchwords would be employed multiple times in the years that followed. The slogan was even employed in the provincial campaign of 1987, during which it was given strong decentralisation themes in a national prologue by Van Mierlo inserted into each provincial manifesto.[178] In 1986, D66 deepened its commitment to constitutional reform and direct democracy by adopting a resolution in favour of a consultative referendum.[179] D66 appeared to have fully embraced its old agenda again.

Nevertheless, the positioning of D66 among the other parties as a social-liberal force made a remarkable comeback after the 1986 elections. This was mostly due to the losses sustained by the VVD and can therefore also be seen as an electoral maneouver. In the same weekend discussion as referred to above, shepherding the liberal tradition was mentioned as a theme, while the VVD's weakness was also noted, a link explicitly made

175. K. Van den Brink, "betr.: politieke plaatsbepaling," Memo to the National Executive on Political Positioning (1987), inventory nr. 104, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

176. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 4.

177. Ibid., 4-5.

178. E. Spier, "betr.: Preambule PS-verkiezingsprogramma," Memo to the National Committee on the Preamble to the Provincial Manifestos dated 30th of October 1986 (1986), HB.DB-86/162, inventory nr. 101, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

179. Democraten 66, National Committee, "HB-resolutie referendum," *Democraat* 19, no. 3 (1986): 9; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Hoofdbestuursnotitie referendum," *Democraat* 19, no. 3 (1986): 9–13.

in the plans for the provincial election campaign later that year.[180]

Towards the end of the decade, D66 became aware that it had not taken a clear position on social and economic issues. To this end, a large-scale policy review operation was launched in 1988 consisting of two committees, the committee 2000 and the committee 2001. Both seem to have had roughly the same terms of reference: to sketch the expected social developments towards the 21st century and formulate proposals on which D66 should focus.[181] The two committees differed in age and expertise and this probably contributed to the fact that their conclusions differed.[182] The committee 2000 started its analysis from economic trends, whereas its younger counterpart committee 2001 started by signalling problems with the welfare state and the political system.[183] This seemed to be the interpretation at the time as well, as Olga Scheltema, the National Committee member overseeing the process, remarked the committee 2000 emphasised social-economic challenges and the environment, the committee 2001, going on remarks by one of its members, Thom de Graaff, emphasised individualisation.[184]

Overall, however, the reports of both the committees only contributed to the thrust of the strategy already established, advocating as they did some of the main themes of the party. At the core of the agenda, the democratisation, individualism and environmental concerns that had accumulated over the years towards some sort of identity remained. Therefore, D66 in the 1986-1989 period, while seeking to broaden the picture, remained on the old tack of the reinforcement strategy of the previous electoral cycle.

7.4.2.3 Tactical changes, 1986-1989

With regards to which constituencies to target, D66 also did not change course between 1986 and 1989. In the aftermath of the election results, discussion mostly focused on the

180. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 3; 6; K. Van den Brink, "Aanzet hoofdlijnen verkiezingscampagne Provinciale Staten," First Rough Outline of a Campaign Plan for the Provincial Elections of 1987 dated 11th of August 1986 (1986), WP 0218K, inventory nr. 98, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 3.

181. V. Smeulders, "Mededelingen - Aandachtspunten t.b.v. HB-vergadering 17 december 1987," Announcements and Focal Points for the National Committee Meeting held 17th of December 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87/208, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 2.

182. O. Scheltema, "betreft: commissies 2000 en 2001, taakomschrijving," Memo to the National Committee and National Executive on the Task Description of the 2000 and 2001 Committees (1987), HB.DB-87/196, inventory nr. 108, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

183. Democraten 66, Commissie 2000, "Rapportage commissie 2000," Report of the committee 2000, version of December 1988 (1988), inventory nr. 112, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; Democraten 66, Commissie 2001, "Verslag Commissie 2001," Report of the committee 2001, dated 12th of December 1988 (1988), HB.DB-88/193, inventory nr. 112, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

184. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Notulen Fractie-HB weekend. 16 en 17 december 1988. Ernst Sillem Hoeve, Den Dolder," Minutes of the Weekend Meeting of the National Committee and Parliamentary Party held 16th and 17th December 1988 (1989), HB.DB-89/021, inventory nr. 115, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1-2.

blind spots where the party was popular but had few members.[185] A renewed interest in who voted for the party and why certainly seemed to have occurred within the ranks of the national committee.[186] Proposals to target specific constituencies, posed in a paper on communication strategy, were still greeted with some scepticism as to whether this did not offend against the programmatic basis of the party.[187]

Chiefly, the attitude that voters should not be targeted opportunistically simply because they were available still prevailed. Rather, the party still expressed a preference to target those who logically could be supposed to be attracted to its programme – in this regard, a member even made the observation that this was the natural party base, albeit not an automatic one.[188] Major target groups for the 1987 provincial elections were largely the same: 1986 voters had to be retained and disaffected voters from the major parties, chiefly the VVD, had to be won over.[189] Even this, however, could be seen as deriving from the programme, which the party now acknowledged had a liberal bend (see the discussion on the party label). Since the programme precedes the tactical considerations in every respect, it has to be concluded that the main thrust of D66's targeting remained narrowly focused on those already attracted to its policies. However, the focus on competing with the VVD adds a slight extending element to the pure reinforcement strategy of the previous electoral cycle.

Efforts among the youth proved highly successful and were continued with renewed vigour after 1986. In a few years' time, the Young Democrats had grown from a fledgling youth wing into the third largest political youth organisation in the country with 1850 members.[190] It should be noted that these members were not equally well-received everywhere in the mother party – many D66 members appear to have seen the Young Democrats as rather upper-class and careerist.[191] Still, this proved enough for D66 to continue its push to increase its prominence among young voters in the coming period, among others with the 2001 Committee, which was solely composed of younger party members.

Now let us turn to the personal component of electoral tactics. Perhaps because of the realisation that Van Mierlo's popularity had saved the party, the national committee seems to have become acutely aware of the need to improve access to talent scouting. This was one of the main parts of the agenda of the new party chairman, Saskia van der

185. Ten Brink, "D66 Verkiezingscampagne 1986. Evaluatie en Aanbevelingen," 17; D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 2.
186. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 1-2.
187. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Beleidsplan Publiciteit en Voorlichting Democraten '66," Policy Plan on Publicity and Communications (1986), HB.DB-86/111, inventory nr. 98, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 7; Democraten 66, National Executive, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Dagelijks Bestuur, gehouden op dinsdag 26 augustus 1986 te Den Haag," Minutes of the National Executive committee meeting held 26th August 1986 (1986), HB.DB-86/117, inventory nr. 98, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Archives of Democrats 66, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.
188. D66, National Executive, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Dagelijks Bestuur, gehouden op dinsdag 26 augustus 1986 te Den Haag," 2.
189. Van den Brink, "Aanzet hoofdlijnen verkiezingscampagne Provinciale Staten," 3.
190. M. Voorn, "Je bent jong en je wilt wat. Nou en?," *Democraat* 19, no. 5 (1986): 19–20.
191. Ibid.

Loo, who took over in 1986.[192] Scouting and coaching new talent appeared as part of the arguments for decentralising the organisation in the organisational discussions, arguing that talent inside the party could only move to the next level with more responsibilities of its own.[193] The party was not so much concerned that it did not have all the requisite expertise within its ranks, but rather that that expertise did not make it to the right place to be able to capitalise on it, and the whole process was found "based too much on coincidence".[194] Efforts were therefore mostly concentrated, once more, on finding the necessary expertise inside the party.

A large part of this was the evaluation of the voting advice for the candidate list which had first been used in the run-up to the 1986 election. On the advice of the voting advice committee for 1989, it was made possible for the voting advice to be split up into separate tranches in order to gain a better professional and regional balance.[195] The national committee remained divided on the issue, however.[196] With the planned elections of 1990 approaching, the national committee decided that it would not give advice to the members, stating that it doubted the added value of the advice in light of its conflicting position with the OMOV principle.[197] Nevertheless, it was overruled by the national congress, and a voting advice committee operated the revised system for 1989, preserving again much of the incumbent parliamentary party in the first tranche.[198] Thus, despite attempts to better use the available resources, the party still largely looked inside its own ranks, part of the reinforcement strategy.

As regards the positioning in the party system, however much the party approved of the

192. M. Voorn, "Voorzitter Saskia van der Loo: D66 moet energie steken in vorming nieuw kader," *Democraat* 19, no. 6 (1986): 3–4.

193. P. Hagedoorn, "Onderwerp: Organisatorische aspekten m.b.t. 1) politieke koers 2) partijstruktuur," Discussion paper for the national committee weekend on political and organisational matters (1986), HB.DB-86/098, inventory nr. 97, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 2.

194. D66, Vrijhoef Committee, "Advies van de Adviesgroep Partijstructuren," 9; D66, National Committee, "Notulen Fractie-HB weekend. 16 en 17 december 1988. Ernst Sillem Hoeve, Den Dolder," 7; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Notulen HB-vergadering d.d. 17 januari 1989," Minutes of the National Committee Meeting held 17th of January 1989 (1989), HB.DB-89.023, inventory nr. 115, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 2.

195. E. Cassee, "Betreft: Evaluatie Stemadviescommissie (CAS)," Evaluation Report on the Voting Recommendation dated 9th of April 1987 (1987), HB.DB-87-081, inventory nr. 105, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Instellingsbesluit Commissie Aandragen Stemadvies (CAS)89," Decision to institute the 1989 Voting Recommendation Committee (1989), HB.DB-89.072, inventory nr. 117, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

196. E. Groen and R. van der Steeg, "betreft: Discussie Stemadviescommissie (CAS)," Discussion paper on the Voting Recommendation, February 1988 (1988), HB.DB-88/036, inventory nr. 109, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofd/-bestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

197. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Concept-Congresstuk stemadvies Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 1990," Draft Congress Paper on the Voting Recommendation for 1990 dated 24th of April 1988 (1988), HB.DB-88/184, inventory nr. 112, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

198. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Stemadvies en toelichting op de totstandkoming van het advies" (1989), Attachment to *Democraat* 22(5).

dual positioning strategy opposed to and among the other parties, it remained a struggle. Evaluations of the 1986 campaign sharply observed that the positioning opposed to all major parties was mostly considered detrimental to the clarity of the party's position.[199] In the discussions on the national committee, a clear analysis of the party's position in the system can be seen to emerge, as well as a clear coalition preference. Social-economically, the party aligned more with CDA and VVD.[200] In terms of the "liberal heritage", more with PvdA and VVD.[201] It was this latter combination, in the form of a renewed commitment to the Des Indes talks, that was preferred. In addition, D66 made the choice to compete more with the VVD than with the PvdA, citing the new "reasonable" course of the PvdA's new leader Wim Kok as one close to D66, whereas differences with the VVD were both clearer and more likely to win over its voters.[202]

Here as in other fields, we see slight adjustments rather than major changes in the existing strategy during the second electoral cycle. D66 remained true to itself as a slightly rebellious party that did not quite want to conform to the expectations of the party system it was founded to explode. Nevertheless, it appears that within this broad reinforcement strategy, the party was coming to the conclusion that it needed to confront the lack of clarity surrounding its political positioning, and appeared more ready to exploit its liberal identification to compete with the VVD. With the reinforcement strategy largely successful, the party started to look outward again, trying to poach away voters from other parties, which is part of an extend strategy. This mix can largely be seen to be a result of the large degree of membership participation – sympathies within the membership were clearly with the more traditional option, while the party organs appear to have thought more opportunistically.

7.5 Conclusion

The D66 response to the 1982 crisis is very complicated, since a wide range of actors and pressures are involved due to the highly democratic party organisation. Multiple times, the members wanted to go further than the party officials, and vice versa, such as in the matters of the voting advices for the candidate selection procedures of 1986 and 1989 and the reform of the party organisation, respectively. Quite tellingly, in many of those instances, the underlying sentiment conforms to a similar pattern: concern with preserving the radical democratic character of the party. This ties in to the most important conclusion that can be taken away from the experience of D66 in crisis: the importance of the party's roots in a radical democratisation movement stand out strongly in the generally reinforcement-oriented recovery strategy which is summarised in table 7.2 .

In the first period following the 1982 election defeat, we see D66 struggling with its place in the party system following the evaporation of Terlouw's 1981 victory. Its intent on the tactical dimension always remained not to go out of its way to broaden its small

199. Van den Brink, "betr.: politieke plaatsbepaling."
200. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 5.
201. Ibid.
202. Van den Brink, "Aanzet hoofdlijnen verkiezingscampagne Provinciale Staten," 3.

Table 7.2: Overview of the D66 recovery strategy, 1982-1989

Cycle	Organisational	Programmatic	Tactical	Overall
First cycle, 1982-1986	Internal de-democratisation (*extension*) • Coordinating powers in national congress increased (*extension*) • Executive voting advice for candidate lists allowed (*extension*)	Downplay, then highlight traditional values (*extension, then reinforcement*) • Democratic Manifesto broadens values (*extension*) • Party rejects "left-liberal" label (*reinforcement*) • Van Mierlo returns, refocuses party on political reform and individualism (*reinforcement*)	Narrower targeting (*reinforcement*) • Focus on 'same voters' , particularly young core electorate (*reinforcement*) • Young Democrats founded (*reinforcement*) • New logo (*neutral*) • First voting advice favour insider candidates (*reinforcement*)	Reinforcement
Second cycle, 1986-1989	Internal de-democratisation (*extension*) • Failed Vrijhoef proposals to create more conventional party council and increase coordinating powers (*extension*) • Unimplemented proposals for polls among members (*minor reinforcement*)	Highlight traditional values (*reinforcement*) • New referendum policy (*reinforcement*) • Committee 2000 emphasises economy and environment (*mixed*) • Committee 2001 emphasises individualism (*reinforcement*) • Social-liberal positioning (*extension*)	Narrower targeting (*reinforcement*) • Measures to increase prominence among young voters (*reinforcement*) • Decentralisation for efficient use of insider talent (*minor reinforcement*) • Extension of targeting with disaffected VVD voters (*extension*)	Reinforcement

base, coloured by its antipathy towards politics based on sectional interests. This immediately presents a problem for a purely functional explanation of the changes, since the votes to be reclaimed belonged largely to non-core voters and this should have impelled the party towards an extension strategy. However, the party did initially seek its recovery in a broader programme, de-emphasising its political reform agenda and giving executive organs within the party a more coordinating role that qualified the radical OMOV principle of its organisation.

All this changed with the return of Van Mierlo and his intervention which seems to have totally overridden the earlier programmatic efforts. In part, of course, the decision to bring back the old leader can be attributed to disappointing polling.[203] On the other hand, however, the ensuing reinforcement strategy did not appear entirely without warning. The rejection of the social-liberal label in favour of the old non-ideological identification reveals that here, too, the party seems to have been guided by its founding role as a party fundamentally opposed to the current political and party system. On hindsight, this may also be related to the party's young age, which could conceivably have strengthened the focus on its founding identity. After all, that is what brought the party together. It appears D66 did not have a large electoral base; but neither did it particularly want one, or at least not in the sense that a base is normally understood. In organisation, reference has already been made to the high emphasis placed on internal democracy and avoiding concentrations of power. In programme, the focus on democratisation was put front and centre again and also deepened with the commitment to a referendum.

Given that the organising principle of D66 is exactly its set of ideas, it is not so strange that its attachment to these ideas had such a strong influence.[204] In this sense, it makes sense that the weak attachment to a base demographic did not lead to an extension strategy. D66's base is not demographic but programmatic – therefore, its programme trumped all concerns and led to an unwillingness to broaden the party's understanding of itself in favour of an extension strategy.

At first sight, we cannot truly judge what the impact of the electoral system was. The party did not change strategy overall between the two cycles, and the changes that do appear in particular areas between the two electoral cycles go both ways. The party also was simply already on the 'right' overall strategy for the 1986 election. However, it bears remembering that before the return of Van Mierlo, the party was leaning more towards an extension strategy, especially in the programmatic area. The fact that Van Mierlo returned because of anticipated electoral problems gives some evidence that electoral pressures might have played a role in the decision to switch to a more reinforcement-oriented strategy. This is also a salient observation because it shows that despite the small size of D66's core vote, the way in which a Proportional Representation system rewards the cultivation of a loyal group of supporters and a distinctive message arguably still played a role, although in the second cycle the party did take some extension-based measures.

203. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 230.

204. Democraten 66, "Statuten en Huishoudelijk Reglement van de Politieke Partij Democraten '66," 1981, art. 3. Accessed January 14, 2018, `http://dnpprepo.ub.rug.nl/id/eprint/9512`, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

The strong attachment to the radical democratic and non-dogmatic ideology of the party also seems a better explanation than a more functional one based on the identity of the defectors, which would have resulted in a more extension-oriented strategy. Arising from the Van den Bos evaluation of 1982, it appears D66 was very keenly aware of the limitations its self-assumed identity placed on it.[205] Despite the very realistic observation that this placed the party at the mercy of the electoral business cycle,[206] which in a less principled party might very well have led to an attempt at an extension strategy, the party instead chose to simply accept these vulnerabilities. D66 provides a clear example of preferences being formed by internal institutional characteristics. That the environmental factors entered into the equation later on can be seen clearly in the second electoral cycle's tactical part of the strategy, when D66, probably having exhausted the effects of its narrower targeting, turned to poaching away the voters of other parties. It appears that in this case, the proposition that PR leads to a reinforcement strategy is born out. D66 seems to have been rewarded for its clear independent positioning, and to have acted accordingly.

Despite imposing a sense of realism that led to a new appreciation of the virtue of clarity in relation to other parties among the ranks of the national committee, the recovery of 1986 largely appears to have locked in the strategy. "Different politics" became the guiding theme for the next electoral cycle.[207] Near the end, however, we see the party try to come to terms with the limitations of the chosen strategy by focusing more on social-economic themes in 1989, on the advice of the Committee 2000,[208] and becoming more and more convinced of the need for a so-called Purple Coalition without the CDA. These developments seem to prefigure the later history of D66, in which the party would finally declare itself to be in the social-liberal tradition, codify its founding principles in a statement of principles and become the most enthusiastic advocate of Purple.

In summary, the case of D66's 1982 electoral crisis appears to be dominated largely by the party's strong attachment to its original set of ideas. 16 years after its foundation, the party was still very attached to their non-dogmatic, radical democratic and pragmatic roots, showing in almost every aspect of the strategy. It presents an alternative for refining the model, since not every party puts equal weight on every internal factor. In D66's case, the absence of a strong identification with a well-delineated social base was trumped as an explanatory factor by its own programmatic ("ideological") basis.

205. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid."
206. Ibid., 18.
207. D66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," 4-5.
208. D66, Commissie 2000, "Rapportage commissie 2000."

8 The Liberal Party, 1970-1974

8.1 Introduction

Such have been the difficulties for the British Liberal Party that in most descriptions of the British party system, it only counts as half a party. Disadvantaged by the electoral system and irrelevant to the formation of government in a Parliament usually dominated by a single-party majority, the implicit description as "half a party" in a two-and-a-half party system is not so far off the mark.[1] The Liberal Party had not always been in this marginal position: when it first arose from the Whig faction in Parliament in the 19th century, the Liberal Party was one of Britain's two major parties. However, history had seen it not merely displaced by the Labour Party in the centre-left role, but nearly wiped out. Throughout the post-World War II era in British politics, the Liberal Party's activists worked with surprising optimism first for their very survival as an independent party, then for a return to power which they believed was just around the corner.[2]

This process naturally ebbed and flowed. The electoral defeat of 1970, which is the focus of this chapter, represents one of those ebbs, with a loss of half the party's seats (from 12 to 6) on a single per cent of the vote lost. The leadership of Jo Grimond between 1955 and 1967 had seen the Liberals develop the beginnings of a distinct identity and brought them a much-needed uptick in their electoral fortunes at by-elections and local elections. This success slowed down in the late 60s, until the 1970 election set the Liberals back to single-figure seat numbers. This traumatic election set the party thinking anew about its role in British politics, leading to a slow but sure change that can be traced forward all the way to the formation of the SDP-Liberal Alliance in the 1980s.

Within the framework of this study, the Liberal Party can be said to have been dealt the worst hand. As a party with low electoral base attachment in the First Past the Post System, it is expected that the Liberal Party will have both their own characteristics and the electoral system going in the direction of extension. The question, however, is whether it is that simple. A closer look at further factors such as ideological attachment reveals that the party can be argued to be more attached to this ideology, introducing a pressure towards reinforcement.

In section 8.2, after the background of the party has been sketched, the party will be measured up according to these variables, deriving specific expectations. To test these expectations, this chapter will then look at the 1970 election defeat and the two electoral cycles following that using archival sources from the time period. The second

1. A. Siaroff, "Two-and-a-half Party Systems and the Comparative Role of the 'Half'," *Party Politics* 9, no. 3 (2003): 268.

2. See W. Wallace, "Survival and Revival," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 43–72.

electoral cycle is a mere eight months long as a result of the failure of the February 1974 election to deliver a Parliament with an overall single-party majority. The dissolution for new elections in October of the same year made the second electoral cycle unusually short. For this reason, unlike in the other chapters, the two electoral cycles will not be considered separately. The results of this analysis will be presented in section 8.4, following a brief description of the 1970 election in section 8.3. The concluding section 8.5 will summarise the argument and point out various interesting details to be taken away for the comparative analysis in chapter 9 of this dissertation.

8.2 The Liberal Party in 1970: setting the stage

The Liberal Party is by origin a cadre party, finding its origin in a loose parliamentary alliance.[3] It arose from the 19th century Whig faction in the British Parliament, allying with Radical MPs to form the Liberal Parliamentary Party in the decade following 1859. The philosophical and ideological tradition they represented has been identified by Brock with applying reason in politics. Liberal Prime Ministers like Gladstone and Lloyd George have earned their place in the history books.[4] However, deep divisions in the party between the followers and opponents of Lloyd George caused its fall from power in 1922, presaging its ultimate displacement by the Labour Party as Britain's major left-of-centre party.

Until after the Second World War, the Liberals maintained a double-figures presence in Parliament. This changed in 1950, when divide-and-conquer strategies from Tory Leader Winston Churchill, himself a former Liberal, saw the Liberal vote collapse entirely with only nine seats being retained.[5] The nadir of Liberal fortunes came a year later in 1951, when only six seats were held onto. From that election onwards, the party's support was concentrated in the 'Celtic Fringe' of the United Kingdom, a region consisting of Scotland, Wales and areas of South West England.[6] This defeat combined with the party's glorious past colours the unique character of the British Liberal Party, and is crucial to understanding the complicated events of the 70s.

It is important to emphasise the small size left over after the party's fall from power. Though data for the time period before the 1970 election is unavailable (or at least never for all three parties at the same time), the Liberals up until 1974 seem locked into a roughly one-to-ten margin with the Conservatives with 190,000 members to the Conservatives' 1.5 million in 1974.[7] The Labour Party, due to affiliation by unions, is vastly larger than the Tories at 6.5 million in 1974.[8] In terms of paid staff, the margin is smaller but still the major parties have at least double the resources the Liberals had at their disposal.[9] These

3. C. Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1984*, Macmillan (London, 1984), 2; P. Norton, "The Liberal Party in Parliament," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 149.

4. M. Brock, "The Liberal Tradition," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 23.

5. D. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 139.

6. Although the Liberals always held representation outside the Celtic fringe until the 1970 election, see ibid., 196.

7. Webb, "The United Kingdom," 847.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 849-850.

numbers dwarf the Liberal Party in all respects. In addition to its lower number of votes and seats, this poses significant challenges to the party. Especially in the British electoral system (see 2.4), which severely disadvantages minor parties like the Liberal Party, this small size imposes heavy constraints. The lack of party finance laws means that the Liberals have less funds at their disposal.[10] This in turn leads to a reliance on volunteer activists or big donors. Finding candidates is also made more difficult and was in fact largely driven by local factors.[11] This difficulty with relying so much on volunteers is also reflected in the fact that most NEC members were volunteers, local councillors or candidates for Parliament at most. The minutes made mention of the difficulties of the officers of the party to fit meetings in London on weekdays into their schedule[12], as well as in the difficulties of getting reliable parliamentary party attendance at the NEC.[13]

Another general factor of the party's background that should be taken into account is the party's complex organisation. The party prided itself on its highly democratic, federal structure with a decentralised power structure. Though the constituency associations were "organs of the party" and were mandated to exist in every constituency by the constitution, it was these associations which admitted members to the party and who kept membership records: there was no national membership.[14] In addition, the constituent parties in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland were fiercely independent. The Liberal Party Constitution only applies to them "insofar as its provisions are accepted by those parties"[15], and therefore functions fully only for the English part of the party, the Liberal Party Organisation (LPO).[16] Scotland, in particular, appeared allergic to any sign of being subordinated to the 'English' LPO.[17]

This combined into a party organization where many key actors were potentially involved in the recovery process. Given the reliance on volunteers of the extra-parliamentary organisation, it should come as no surprise that the highly autonomous Liberal Parliamentary Party (LPP) had an important role. Members of the LPP attended various party bodies.[18] In particular, a Liberal MP always chaired the extra-parliamentary Standing

10. Ibid., 867. The funding for opposition parliamentary parties was only introduced in 1975.

11. M. Steed, "The Electoral Strategy of the Liberal Party," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 79.

12. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the NEC and Parliamentary Party held on Tuesday 24th September at the Cavendish Hotel, Eastbourne" (1970), p. 112, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 112.

13. Ibid.

14. Liberal Party, "Constitution of the Liberal Party as adopted at Brighton 1969" (1969), LIBERAL PARTY/ADDENDA/1, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, sections A.2, B.2 and C.

15. Ibid., Section A.1.

16. D. Kavanagh, "Organization and Power in the Liberal Party," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 124.

17. For example Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on 11th of December 1970 at the Albany Hotel, Nottingham" (1970), p. 128-132, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London; See also Kavanagh, "Organization and Power in the Liberal Party," 125.

18. Liberal Party, "Constitution of the Liberal Party as adopted at Brighton 1969," section A.4.(a). Thorpe noted in the minutes from September 1970 cited above that the reverse was also true: members of affiliated organisations could also send a delegation to the parliamentary party meeting.

Committee which ruled on policy.[19] The leader, who was elected by his fellow MPs, also drafted the manifesto, albeit in consultation with the Standing Committee.[20] Though the extra-parliamentary party voiced its opinions through the Liberal Assembly, the party's national congress, and the Party Council, extra-parliamentary decisions were never binding on the party's MPs. Although the there was also a link between these bodies and the Standing Committee[21], in effect the LPP had a large degree of control over the policy and the political tactics of the party.

The extra-parliamentary party was governed by the National Executive Committee (NEC). Its job was simply to "direct the work of the party"[22], which combined with the decentralised structure of the party to produce a largely coordinating body. The NEC had no responsibility for policy.[23] Another major power, that of candidate selection, rested with the local associations, overseen nationally not by the NEC but by the Candidates Committee, which had heavy representation from the LPP and the candidates themselves.[24] Relationships with the LPP were not always good. Whenever such a conflict arose, the NEC could only bank on the moral authority of being the representative of the membership. It is unsurprising, therefore, that it played this role in these cases.[25] Expressing the views of the extra-parliamentary organisation, however, was not primarily the role of the NEC. That fell to the Liberal Assembly, the annual national congress of the party, and the more frequent Party Council. Though the resolutions were not binding on MPs and were communicated directly to (non-Liberal) government ministers rather than through the party's own MPs, they had a certain authority within the party itself. Kavanagh notes that Liberal Party Assemblies made key strategic decisions.[26] They regularly passed resolutions on the party strategy. The Party Council did much of the preparatory work.

The upshot of this decentralised organisation, which the Liberals themselves considered to be eminently democratic, was that a coalition for a certain strategy could be expected to be difficult to find. At the very least, it needed the support of both the extra-parliamentary and the parliamentary wing of the party to implement, as various parts of the party had varying degrees of influence on the various dimensions of the strategy. The leadership of the Liberal Parliamentary Party was absolutely crucial because of its influence over policy and strategy – but it was fed by the extra-parliamentary organisation, as we shall see, at certain crucial moments.

This section serves to set the stage for the analysis. In doing so, it links the various independent variables of the model formulated in chapter three to their respective values and the expectations they produce. On the basis of these measurements, which will be discussed further in sections 8.2.1 through 8.2.4 below, concrete operational expectations

19. Norton, "The Liberal Party in Parliament," 150.
20. Liberal Party, "Constitution of the Liberal Party as adopted at Brighton 1969," sections A.4.(a) and F.4.
21. Ibid., section F.
22. Ibid., section I.4.
23. Kavanagh, "Organization and Power in the Liberal Party," 137.
24. Liberal Party, "Constitution of the Liberal Party as adopted at Brighton 1969," section H.
25. Such as when Thorpe unilaterally declared the Liberal Party willing to enter a national coalition in a party-political broadcast, as described in more detail below.
26. Kavanagh, "Organization and Power in the Liberal Party," 137.

will be formulated regarding the strategy chosen by the Liberal Party after 1970. Following this setup of the key variables, the key actors in the Liberal organisation shall also be discussed in order to set the stage for the discussion of the party's shock defeat in 1970 and the following crisis.

8.2.1 Electoral base attachment

The Liberal Party scores low on electoral base attachment. Having originated as a cadre party, the Liberal Party does not have a very clearly delineated electoral base. Curtice notes that survey research showed some tendency towards middle class support, but that any relationships that were found were weak. In Britain's class-dominated party system, this meant the Liberal Party had relatively weak demographic roots.[27] Next to the working-class Labour Party and the upper-class Conservatives, the Liberal Party's lack of a clear base in a class stands out even more. In fact, where the Liberal Party is strongest, in South West England, surveys showed that working-class support was stronger than middle-class support.[28]

Indeed, party identification with the Liberals was rather weak.[29] As a result, voters were not particularly loyal to the party either: often, their vote for the Liberals served as a temporary retreat from either of the two main parties. In Curtice's words: "[the Liberal voter] is, above all, a temporary defector from one of the major parties".[30] Liberal policies were not widely known and instead the party was judged on its style and centrist credentials.[31] The timing of a by-election or solid work on a local level could do more for the Liberal vote than its national image.

In addition, support was geographically dispersed, putting the party at a disadvantage in Britain's First Past the Post electoral system. Apart from its heartlands in the so-called 'Celtic fringe' of Southwest England, Scotland and Wales, the Liberal Party support was spread thinly across the country.[32] That having been said, the Liberals did tend to win most of their seats in rural areas – which is remarkable given the fact that the membership of the party and areas where it succeeded in council elections to provide it with a sizeable number of councillors were largely urban in nature.[33] All these factors result in a lack of formal links to any particular base group.

In addition, the party's Liberal ideology and its focus on the application of reason led to a strong individualism that was to some extent antithetical to targeting a specific base. This means, in terms of our operationalisation, that the party did not just lack any formal or personal links to strengthen its attachment to its electoral base, but that that attachment was actually weakened by informal norms to the contrary. This leads to the lowest possible level of electoral base attachment. To the Liberals, their attachment to

27. J. Curtice, "Liberal Voters and the Alliance: Realignment or Protest?," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 101.
28. Ibid., 102.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 105.
31. Ibid., 107.
32. Ibid., 108.
33. Kavanagh, "Organization and Power in the Liberal Party," 128.

Liberalism as an ideology was what made them willing to work for the party and they were absolutely convinced that in time voters would see it was best for them too.[34] This contrasts with the class basis of the Labour and Conservative Parties.

Stated in terms of our model, this should contribute to an extension strategy. Since the Liberal Party has no loyalty to any particular group of voters, it becomes easier for the party to extend its vote than to focus exclusively on reinforcing the vote that it already has. In fact, the degree of ideological resistance to advocating the interests and views of one group above the others should lead to a preference for this particular sort of strategy. After all, reinforcing the base requires paying special attention to voters like one's current voters, and that would go contrary to the ideological idea that Liberalism should solely be concerned with voters as individuals and with pursuing the public interest.

8.2.2 Ideological Attachment

There is not much in the way of a single, organised Liberal ideology to be attached to. At its genesis, the Liberal Parliamentary Party from which the Liberal Party originated consisted of Whigs, Radicals and a vast mass of moderates.[35] They are still visible in the post-war party, despite the defection of some of the Radicals to the Labour Party and some more centre-right members joining the Conservatives as Liberal Unionists. The youth wing in particular had a rather radical bend, even to the point of advocating direct action, that brought them at loggerheads with the rest of the party.[36] Overall, the Liberal Party was repositioned in the post-war era as a non-socialist centrist alternative to both major parties. Nevertheless, as a party president put it, Liberals "do not take directions from [their] leaders".[37]

However, for the purpose of this study the Liberal Party can be seen as a party strongly attached to ideology. In chapter four, ideological attachment was operationalised in terms of the degree to which a party, and in particular its elites, lets itself be guided by its ideology.[38] This is definitely the case for the Liberals. A large factor towards this is the lack of career prospects for many Liberals. Lacking hope of advancement, Liberal activists are altogether more inclined to put in their effort for the cause they believe in rather than their own benefit, often having stuck with the party through thick and thin.[39] Indeed, Dutton notes the existence of a surprising optimism in many Liberal activists as a way of sustaining the motivations of many party members.[40] Significantly, the party refused to entertain even the hypothetical idea of a compromise for government office, continuing to work for a purely liberal government. This emphasis on opposing both Labour and Tories is a clear indicator of high ideological attachment.

This Liberal belief system was strengthened by the efforts of Jo Grimond, party leader between 1955 and 1967. A prolific writer, Grimond set out to clarify the party's muddled

34. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 171.
35. Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1984*, 3.
36. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 198-199.
37. Quoted in ibid., 176.
38. Following the definition of ideology in P. Mair and C. Mudde, "The Party Family and its Study," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): 220.
39. Wallace, "Survival and Revival," 48.
40. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 171.

image. He sought to cast the party as unashamedly progressive, seeking realignment in the party system.[41] A very influential idea that developed during the Grimond years would be the idea of community politics, a vague local brand of liberalism which involved activism on very local issues and empowerment of communities. This was an outgrowth of a focus on local elections adopted by Grimond: in his own words "every time a local Liberal councillor gets a bus-stop moved to a better place he strikes a blow for the Liberal Party."[42] However, Grimond was not the main architect of the concept, which was championed in particular by the increasingly radical young liberals.[43] Though Cook notes that the model was "not particularly Liberal, nor indeed British",[44] various local successes secured the idea's influence and it can be regarded as part of an ideological tradition in the party of some standing by 1970, even though the idea was appropriated by the more radical Young Liberals.[45]

The Liberal Party does not have a very clear ideological programme in the sense that it has a codified ideology. However, despite all this, there are various reasons the party can be qualified as strongly attached to its ideology. First of all, there is the zeal of party activists. Secondly, the idea of community politics, having recently been taken into the party's ideological discourse, was being increasingly deployed to structure the party's actions. Finally, and most importantly, the party appears strongly attached to the differentness of Liberalism, even if only cast as being very much "not socialism" and "not Conservatism", as evidenced by the resistance elicited by even the slightest idea of compromising to work with either party. Making this distinction too sharp is clearly disadvantageous for a party which, like the Liberals, is unlikely ever to win a majority under FPTP. Nevertheless, this is what the Liberal Party stuck to, revealing a considerable degree of ideological attachment. In the terms of the model, this would lead to a reinforcement strategy, particularly in the field of the party programme, given how strongly the party's ideological discourse seems to frame its actions and narrative.

8.2.3 External environment: electoral and party system

The external challenges to the Liberals are important to understanding this particular case. The Westminster system with its First Past the Post constituencies imposes severe constraints on smaller parties by underrepresenting them and disadvantages them by tactical voting, especially if, like the Liberal Party, its support is evenly spread across the country.[46] Although the Rose index of proportionality for the 1970 election is atypically high at 91.5[47], the system still disadvantaged the Liberals even at this election, with only

41. Ibid., 181.

42. Quote from 1960 cited in A. Watkins, *The Liberal Dilemma* (London: MacGibbon / Kee, 1966), 108.

43. Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1984*, 149.

44. Ibid.

45. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 198.

46. G. V. Golosov, "Party nationalization and the translation of votes into seats under single-member plurality electoral rules," *Party Politics* 24, no. 2 (2018): 123.

47. Calculated by the author based on data from H. Döring and P. Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)," Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, `http://www.parlgov.org`.

1% of the seats on the strenght of 7.5% of the vote.[48] With only a handful of MPs elected in this way, it is hard for any party to use its influence in a house dominated by hundreds of government and opposition MPs.[49] The party has to make do with whatever MPs it can get elected. In this regard, it is worthwhile to note that most seats held by Liberal MPs were taken from the Conservatives and that these seats were concentrated in rural areas.

The Liberals in Parliament operated under severe constraints that gave them less opportunity to profile the party. Time in the House of Commons is dominated by the government and the Official Opposition.[50] The Liberals, lacking such recognition, had limited opportunity to introduce their own bills, since they had to use the facilities available for individual backbench MPs to do so. This limited the Liberal Party's visibility and necessitated a certain opportunism and willingness to be disruptive from their MPs which was not always forthcoming.[51]

Contrary to their own optimism, the Liberals were not an imminent threat to the two-party system. They did, however, pose a significant spoiler effect, letting in one major party or the other, or were perceived to do so. Both major parties, both Labour and Conservative, claimed the other was let in by the Liberal advance and regularly accused them of a spoiler effect. The Liberals, on their part, were not entirely sure whether to side with either of the parties. Their election literature often portrayed the two major parties as virtually identical, most famously using the slogan "Which twin is the Tory?".[52] However, there existed in the Liberal ranks a sense of being a progressive party which led most members to develop a strong antipathy to the Conservative Party, although at previous stages in the party's history the same could be said for being anti-socialist and therefore anti-Labour.[53]

Finally, we should make note of the fact that the Liberals did not even stand a particularly good chance of holding the balance of power in 1970. Even when the party was on the rise, the majoritarian Westminster system was not disposed towards coalitions. Neither major party seems to have even considered the possibility of allying themselves with the Liberals. Neither, as noted in section 8.2.2 above, did the Liberals themselves. Polls justified this stance: they revealed in the 60s that many voters would consider voting for the Liberal Party if they stood a realistic chance to win a majority and form a government.[54]

The implications in terms of the model are as follows. The Liberal Party's electoral base is very dispersed in almost every sense and the party's problems are largely a function of it lacking a base. This is related to the electoral system. As argued in chapter three, core voters in a First Past the Post System are restricted in their opportunities to defect

48. The Rose index is calculated by subtracting the sum of the differences between each party's voteshare and seatshare at a given election, divided by two, from 100. See R. Rose, ed., *International Encyclopedia of Elections* (Washington: CQ Press, 2000)

49. Norton, "The Liberal Party in Parliament," 151.

50. Ibid., 157.

51. Ibid., 153.

52. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 193; Steed, "The Electoral Strategy of the Liberal Party," 87.

53. Wallace, "Survival and Revival," 57.

54. Curtice, "Liberal Voters and the Alliance," 103.

Table 8.1: Overview of the Independent Variables: the Liberal Party in 1970

Internal factors	**Measurement**	**Expected Strategy**
Electoral base attachment	Weak	Extension
Ideological attachment	Strong	Reinforcement
External environment		
Electoral system	First Past the Post	Extension
Previous election	Above average (+2,6%)	Extension

by the geographical element of the system.[55] In addition, it becomes more attractive to go after unaligned voters who will decide the election. This is compounded in the case of the Liberal Party by a geographical element: the party's small electoral base is relatively dispersed, which according to Golosov combines with the party's size to put it at a disadvantage.[56] Therefore, the Liberal Party cannot afford to prioritise those that already vote for it or those represented by its membership. The former, being rural, either already live in rural seats won by the Party or in Conservative safe seats. The latter, being more urban in nature, mostly live in Labour safe seats. The party cannot afford to be picky. The Westminster system therefore leads, as with the major parties, towards an extension strategy as the party's only route to power is to appeal to those it can win over to gain more seats.

8.2.4 Overview and expectations

Table 8.1 gives an overview of the values of the independent variables in the case of the Liberal Party. As may be seen, propositions 3 (on electoral base attachment) and proposition 4 (on ideological attachment) point in two opposite directions. Based on its weak electoral base attachment, the party should be more likely to pursue an extension strategy, whereas its strong ideological attachment should predispose it towards a reinforcement strategy. Employing propositions 5a through 5c to split the effect, the party seems likely to pursue a reinforcement strategy on the programmatic dimension and a reinforcement strategy elsewhere. In addition, the FPTP electoral system, as argued above, constrains a reinforcement strategy, which should lead to a shift towards an extension strategy in the second cycle.

8.3 The 1970 General Election defeat

In 1970, the Liberals went into the election with a new leader. Following Grimond's resignation in 1967, the Parliamentary Party elected Jeremy Thorpe, MP for North Devon. Thorpe had previously been involved in the party's fundraising and over the campaign

55. See R. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing: how do parties target voters in election campaigns?," *Electoral Studies* 21, no. 3 (2002): 367–382.

56. Golosov, "Party nationalization and the translation of votes into seats under single-member plurality electoral rules," 123.

proved to possess flair and showmanship.[57] Over a range of by-elections during the 1966-1970 Parliament and local elections, the party had not been able to sustain its gains of the early 60s, with a by-election in Birmingham Ladywood in 1969 as the only exception.[58] Although polls remained between 7 and 11 per cent of the vote, the electoral picture was starting to look worrisome.[59]

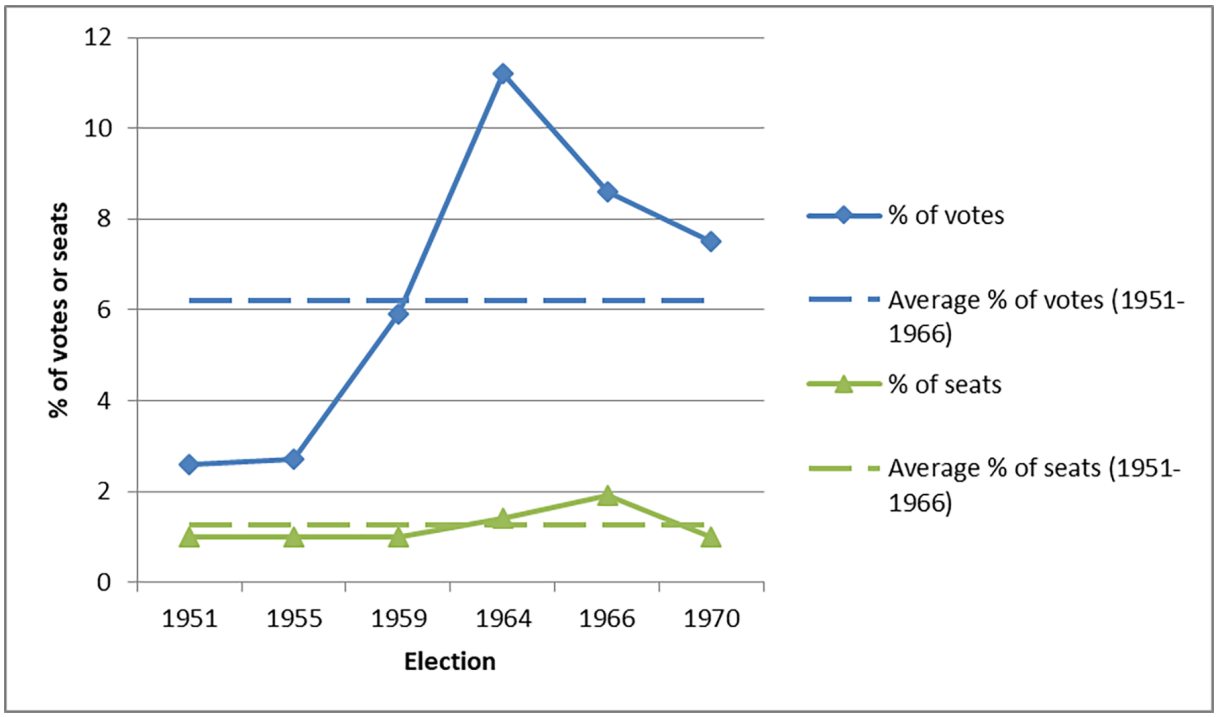
In addition, the Liberals were facing serious structural challenges. Their financial situation had become so poor that they were only able to employ seventeen full-time election agents acting on the party's behalf in parliamentary constituencies to organise its campaign efforts there.[60] More worryingly, the party's few distinctive policies were in danger of being co-opted or outflanked. Groundbreaking by-election victories for Scottish and Welsh Nationalists threatened the party's support in Scotland and Wales by outflanking it on its longstanding policy of devolution.[61] In addition, a major point of distinctiveness introduced by Grimond, the party's support for joining the European common market, was co-opted by both major parties.[62]

At the same time, the Conservative Party had moved to a more free-market position. The 1970 election focused on the economy, contrasting this position to Labour's Keynesian economics. The Liberals were caught in the middle, having no clear profile on the issue.[63] In the end, the Tory move to the right paid off: in a result that surprised the pollsters, the Labour government was thrown out as the Conservative Party secured an outright majority. In the event, the Liberal vote fell by slightly over one per cent from 8.6% to 7.5% of the vote. This is not much, and as can be seen in figure 8.1[64], the party was in fact still above the average performance of the last five elections up to and including 1966 by 1,3%, down from 2,4%. Going on the operationalisation of the identity of the defectors given in chapter four, they probably mainly lost non-core voters. However, this was enough for the party to lose six of the twelve seats it had won at the previous election.

The defeat was "traumatic" for the Liberal Party.[65] The loss in seats and the failure in many seats to poll the 20% needed to stand a realistic chance at the next election dashed the optimism about a Liberal revival.[66] However, a point of light was that the trend had been bucked in urban and sub-urban areas like Rochdale, Liverpool Wavertree and Southport by hard-working and well-regarded local Liberal councillors.[67] When compared to the optimism described in section 8.2 above, the contrast with the national result is painfully obvious. The 1970 election result therefore served as a reminder of a harsh electoral reality: the Liberal Party was on the periphery of British politics, without a

57. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 196.
58. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 194; Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1984*, 147.
59. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 194.
60. Ibid., 195.
61. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 195; Wallace, "Survival and Revival," 63.
62. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 195.
63. Ibid.
64. Based on data from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."
65. S. Mole, "Community Politics," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 258.
66. Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1984*, 151; Mole, "Community Politics," 258.
67. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 196.

Figure 8.1: Electoral performance of the Liberal Party, 1951-1970



solid base of supporters, at the mercy of the vagaries of an electoral and party system that disadvantaged it. It was from this nadir of Liberal fortunes that the party departed as it searched for a way to regain the momentum it had enjoyed during the Grimond years.

8.4 The recovery strategy

The first stage of the model after an electoral shock is the 'whether'-stage. At this point, the question arises whether there was a recognition of the need to change anything at all. Whether a party feels the need to change is the result of the existence of a coalition for change among those actors making the key decisions, influenced by the extent of the defeat and previous experiences. In addition, the fact that the Liberals were strangely optimistic about the possibility of a breakthrough gives us even more reason to consider the option that they did not feel the need for change immediately. One major factor that might have impacted on this is the fact that even though the party lost half its seats, definitely qualifying as a crisis, it only lost a single percentage point of its share of the popular vote. This could strengthen voices for business-as-usual, since the development of the share of the vote can be interpreted as a minor setback.

Let us consider the immediate reaction in the NEC to the defeat. Discussing the campaign, the consensus seemed to be that morale was high despite the losses.[68] Lack of

68. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting held 4th July 1970 at the National Liberal Club" (1970), p. 93-99, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 96.

resources was a prime candidate for a diagnosis.[69] There was also a discussion whether the lack of unity was a strength or a weakness. Although two members of the NEC reported that they would be moving for a review of strategy and organisation at the party council, the NEC itself did not pass a resolution about this potential overhaul, and no resolution was even proposed.[70] The reaction of the NEC was therefore optimistic despite the huge loss in seats. In fact, the resolution that was passed at the meeting was a reaffirmation of Liberal policies and practices so far, including a reaffirmation of the policy rejecting cooperation with either major party.[71]

In addition, the NEC reaffirmed its support for electoral reform, noting that the result of the election proved the need to change the electoral system. Though framed in general terms as opposition to a government without a majority of the voters behind it and the denial of representation to "millions of voters", this can be seen as part of the response to the defeat.[72] It was justified to blame the defeat in part on the electoral system that disadvantaged the party. This would also reduce the necessity of further changes. The 1970 Assembly adopted an extensive resolution on party strategy and tactics, which lays the groundwork for some of the early reaction to the defeat by explicitly stating its intent "to maintain the independence of the Liberal Party in opposition to both Conservatism and Socialism".[73]

The party, then, seemed divided on whether its current course had to change in response to the defeat. However, the defeat definitely showed that the electoral system posed great challenges to the party and that a liberal breakthrough was certainly not as close as they thought. However slow and scattered, a response to the crisis developed gradually over the 1970-1974 period.

8.4.1 Organisational changes, 1970-1974

In organisational terms, the Liberals saw themselves as a very democratic organisation. This owed much to their decentralised party structure and the space given to the multitude of opinions within the party. Since members, in the eyes of the Liberal decision-makers, already had a large say within the party, it is perhaps not surprising that further expansion of membership influence was not really on the agenda. Although there had been some bitterness over the ascent of Thorpe to the leadership, Stark notes that the matter of leadership elections did not resurface until 1975, well after the 1970-1974 crisis.[74]

If there were struggles over the party organisation, it was largely between the various institutional actors. The Liberal Parliamentary Party and the NEC butted heads more than once over their relationship to eachother.[75] The NEC resented it whenever the LPP

69. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting held 4th July 1970 at the National Liberal Club," 96.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid., 95-97.

72. Ibid., 95.

73. Liberal Party. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970" (1970), LIBERAL/8/4, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 5.

74. L. P. Stark, *Choosing a Leader: Party Leadership Contests from Macmillan to Blair* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 71.

75. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the NEC and Parliamentary Party held on

went beyond the expressed statements of party policy without consulting the executive, especially on the matter of political tactics. However, the matter was not resolved.

There were also concerns that the dispersed nature of the party organisation hampered its effectiveness, particularly in campaigning. A report by retiring North Cornwall agent, John Spiller, reported that the rarity of full-time agents contributed negatively to the party's electoral fortunes.[76] This observed organisational weakness might be part of the reason why the party took concrete steps to strengthen the coordinating functions of its organisation. Most importantly, the party created a national membership scheme.[77]

These concrete reforms can be seen as part of the slight concentration of powers in the hands of the national organisation. The move to create a national membership ensured that the party knew where its members were and could more easily use them as resources.[78] In addition, the Assembly requested that the regional parties develop strategies to be integrated into a national whole, with organisation tailored to this new strategy.[79] These reforms, as well as the thrust of the Spiller report, represent a slight internal dedemocratisation, shifting power away from the basic unit of party organisation – the association – to the national level. This forms part of an overall extension strategy, since it increases the opportunity of influencing the democratic decision-making process for the party elite at the expense of ordinary members.

8.4.2 Programmatic changes 1970-1974

One problem in analysing the programmatic component of the Liberal Party's recovery strategy is that there was limited opportunity for strategy. The party's policies were not very well-known to voters. In Parliament, the limited amount of time available under the Ten Minute Rule for Private Members' Bills posed an obstacle to implementing their policies and making them known. It is illustrative of the lack of capacity for the LPP to get things done that the Council archives contain correspondence with Conservative Ministers directly about policy resolutions, rather than expectations on the parliamentary party to try to get them implemented.

Especially when it comes to the parliamentary party, therefore, all this begs the question whether there was anything strategic about the programmatic choices made in Parliament. Occasionally, there is a definite sign of political strategy involved with the activities of Liberal MPs, such as with three 1972/1973 bills on industrial relations and the opposition

Tuesday 24th September at the Cavendish Hotel, Eastbourne," 112; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 29th June 1974 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club" (1974), p. 168-176, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 174-176; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the NEC and Parliamentary Party held 11th July 1974 at 6pm at the House of Commons" (1974), p. 178-179, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 178-179.

76. John. Spiller, "Memorandum on Liberal Party Organisation." (), p. 22-37, LIBERAL/2/9, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 30-31.

77. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 28th of November 1970 at 10am at the National Liberal Club" (1970), p. 119-126, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 123.

78. Ibid.

79. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970," 5-6.

to the government's 1971 Immigration Act.[80] These formed the basis of two party-wide campaigns in those years supported by the NEC, trying to win over voters on these issues and gain attention for key Liberal policy pledges.[81] For example, the most extensive focus of parliamentary activity, the Industrial Relations campaign, was concerned with implementing 1970 pledges like industrial democracy in the form of works councils.[82] It is also connected with the first resolution reacting to the defeat in which the NEC called for the party to strongly oppose the incoming government's policies in this area.[83] It could be argued that this is part of a reinforcement strategy highlighting the party values, especially since industrial democracy and co-ownership had been part of the new Liberal identity rapidly built up by Grimond during his leadership, much like the concept of community politics.

There is very little strategy amidst most of the resolutions of the party council. At any particular Council session, a multitude of different resolutions were discussed. There seems to be little in terms of a general direction emanating from these resolutions. They are concerned with topical issues, or with policy details, rather than purposefully developing certain areas of party policy.[84] There is, therefore, a lot of "noise" involved in using the Council and Assembly resolutions as indicators of programmatic changes.

There is one exception to all this: the party was very purposeful in its determination to make the idea of community politics an absolute cornerstone of its political and electoral agenda. Though the NEC did not mention the theme in its first meeting[85], the 1970 Assembly passed a strategy resolution to make community politics the party's "prime strategic emphasis".[86] A NEC working party set up to implement the resolution then focused primarily on community politics and urban areas.[87] This led to the publication of a community politics guide for those unfamiliar with the concept.[88] A community

80. Liberal Party, "Liberal Candidates Handbook: Pathways to Power" (1974), LIBERAL/15/17, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 318; 326.

81. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Saturday, March 20th, 1971 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club" (1971), p. 144-150, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 147; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Friday, 21st of May 1971, at 7:30pm at the Municipal Annexe, Liverpool" (1971), p. 157-162, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 158; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Saturday, 26th of June 1971 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club" (1971), p. 163-169, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 167.

82. Liberal Party, "Liberal Candidates Handbook: Pathways to Power," 318.

83. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting held 4th July 1970 at the National Liberal Club," 96.

84. See for example: Liberal Party. Party Council, "Resolutions Passed at the Meeting of the Liberal Party Council held at Leeds on 28th of July 1973" (1973), p. 63-65, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 63; Liberal Party. Party Council, "Resolutions Passed at the Meeting of the Liberal Party Council held on 27 January 1973 at Birmingham" (1973), p. 163-164, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 163-165.

85. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Saturday, 26th of June 1971 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club," 167.

86. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970," 5-6.

87. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 28th of November 1970 at 10am at the National Liberal Club," 122.

88. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Friday, 23rd

politics co-ordinator was appointed to lead the charge.[89] This focus was subsequently reaffirmed by the Council, which requested that the general election be fought around the theme[90], a point of view echoed by the 1973 Assembly.[91] Andrew Ellis, a member of the Standing Committee, produced an extensive paper for the Council containing detailed policy implications to be explored for use in a general election campaign themed around community politics in this way.[92]

The electoral manifesto presented in February 1974 cemented this by including a prominent defence of the theme in its first pages.[93] However fluid and diffuse the concept of community politics is, therefore, it proved to be a major theme for the party and its intensification forms the main part of the party's programmatic recovery efforts. The amount of trust the party had in community politics stems from both internal and external sources. First of all, it had been inaugurated into the ideological traditions of the party relatively quickly, as it had gradually taken shape under successful former leader, Jo Grimond. Secondly, since there was a greater degree of liberal success at the local level, it seems logical that the party – with such a strong representation of councillors – would search for the solution there. Both link up with the Liberal conviction that their ideology was a strength to lead to this reinforcement strategy. Convinced as the Liberals appeared that their ideology would win out in the end, a concept such as community politics which had been linked to local successes seemed an obvious choice to focus on.

Oddly enough, the manifesto for the October 1974 election does not mention the community politics theme even once.[94] The campaign handbook for activists and candidates produced for that second election, however, mentions that various themes related to community politics "permeate all the policies (...) in this handbook".[95] It therefore still functioned as a basis on which party policy was built, but it was no longer referenced very explicitly at least in the manifesto. Perhaps, having a shot at the balance of power convinced the Liberals to render a more concrete policy offering as a potential coalition

of July 1971 at 7:30pm at the National Liberal Club" (1971), p. 170-176, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 176; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Saturday the 21st of August 1971 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club" (1971), p. 177-182, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 179-180.

89. Liberal Party. Party Council, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Liberal Party Council held on Saturday 14 April 1973 at 1am at the Ship Hotel, Reading" (1973), p. 97-108, LIBERAL/2/4, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 103.

90. Liberal Party. Party Council, "Private Business Motions introduced at the Liberal Party Council held 24th of November 1973" (1973), p. 18-19, LIBERAL/3/1, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 19.

91. Liberal Party. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at Southport 18th - 22nd September" (1973), 73A, p.15-16, LIBERAL/8/4, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 15-16.

92. A. Ellis, "A Community Politics Theme for the General Election," Paper circulated to the Liberal Party Council, dated 14 January 1974, revised 4 June 1974 (1974), p. 286-291, LIBERAL/3/2, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 286-291.

93. Liberal Party, "Change the Face of Britain: the Liberal Party Manifesto 1974," 1974, accessed November 21, 2017, `http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lib74feb.htm`.

94. Liberal Party, "Why Britain needs a Liberal Government: the Liberal Party Manifesto October 1974.," 1974, accessed November 21, 2017, `http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lib74oct.htm`.

95. Liberal Party, "Liberal Candidates Handbook: Pathways to Power," ix.

deal. Nevertheless, it remains clear that the focus of the Liberal Party on its by-then trusted theme of community politics had intensified as a result of the crisis, leading to this reinforcement strategy. This is important for the analysis, since it is deviant from the rest of the strategy. However, this deviation matches the pattern of the party's low electoral base attachment and high ideological attachment in such a way that it provides support for proposition 5 that the former impacts upon the tactical and organisational dimensions more strongly, while the latter impacts the ideological dimension more strongly.

8.4.3 Tactical Changes, 1970-1974

The greatest shift in Liberal thinking as a result of the 1970 election result, however, occurred in the field of political tactics. This had been a long-standing debate in the Liberal Party on where to stand, although Steed considered this debate "sterile".[96] This question arose because of the rule in the British electoral system by which polling beneath 12.5% of the votes in a constituency lost the party a 150-pound deposit.[97] This would make it expensive to run in a large amount of seats where the party stood no chance. In addition to this, the expenses of supporting a campaign in each constituency also figured into the equation.

It should be understood that the aim at this point was not in question: the party dogmatically held to the idea of a majority Liberal government.[98] The only question was how to get there, via focus on winnable seats or with as broad a front as possible. The Spiller report reveals that this debate was alive and well in the party after 1970. The terminology is interesting because it corresponds almost perfectly with the descriptors of both ends of the tactical dimension: a broader focus or a narrower one. Spiller himself proposed a sort of compromise which seems to have originated from a Conservative tactic he observed: a narrow front within a broad front, in which the party would fight every seat (a costly endeavour) but concentrate most of its resources where it could win.[99]

The 1970 Assembly, in the strategy resolution of that year opted for "the broadest possible front".[100] In 1973, the Assembly again reaffirmed this commitment, this time to a "broad front".[101] It is good to remind oneself of the fact that it was altogether unclear if the party could follow up on this intention in practice.[102] After all, as has been noted above, the Liberals hardly had the luxury of having many potential candidates due to their size, and certainly not evenly divided between the constituencies which had the power to decide their own candidates. In this case, they did follow up on the intention

96. Steed, "The Electoral Strategy of the Liberal Party," 79.

97. *Representation of the People Act 1918*, 8 Geo. V. c. 64., section 26(1) and 27(1) as originally enacted.

98. As shown by the resolutions adopted by the Liberal Assemblies of 1970 and 1973 and the NEC: Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970"; Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at Southport 18th - 22nd September"; Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting held 4th July 1970 at the National Liberal Club," 95-97.

99. Spiller, "Memorandum on Liberal Party Organisation.," 31.

100. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970," 5.

101. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at Southport 18th - 22nd September," 15-16.

102. As late as July 1974, the NEC doubted whether the 600-candidate target would be met. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Friday 26th July 1974 at 7:30pm at the Victoria Road Church Institute, Leicester" (1974), p. 138-145, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 143.

to pursue a broad front, leading to the broadest slate of Liberal candidates in years, with the Liberals fielding 517 candidates in February 1974, and an almost full slate of 619 in October that year.[103] By comparison, the front of 1970 was rather narrower with a mere 332 candidates fielded, just over half of the seats.[104]

Centralised control over the party's candidates was somewhat of a luxury. Though the NEC set ambitious targets, their relative insignificance and reliance on volunteer activists made it hard to find candidates. This is a significant fact, because it explains why the Liberals did not move much on their selection rules. They simply could not, and not just because of the high degree of control local associations had on selection. Even if they had found more candidates, it was hard to predict what the parliamentary party would look like, since the FPTP system made Liberal fortunes everywhere quite unpredictable. The archival record underscores this: even though they had decided upon a broader slate of candidates, the NEC minutes in mid-1974 note that it was hard to find candidates to bring the party close to the full slate it intended.[105] Nevertheless, the party succeeded, perhaps because of the enthusiasm generated by the prospect of a breakthrough, which was a possibility after the February 1974 result which saw the Liberals hold the balance of power.

The Liberals, therefore, consistently opted for a broad front. In addition, the Assembly directed that more attention be given to the major cities, where the Liberals were not strong electorally.[106] The resolutions do not include a reasoning for a broad front. However, there is a likely candidate explanation. As seen earlier, the Liberals had a strong tradition of individualism. They lacked a well-defined constituency. In such circumstances, attempting to broaden the base seems the logical solution, since this would open up the possibility of gaining the durable support of the groups won over by this strategy. This was certainly the case for urban voters: the party was not strong electorally in the cities except perhaps occasionally in local elections, but its membership was primarily urban. There was, therefore, a reasonable prospect that by focusing on winning over voters outside the largely rural areas where the party already held seats, the party would be able to help increase its core vote.

More importantly, however, the electoral objectives of the party itself began to shift. While still committed to a Liberal government as the end goal, there was a large shift in the attitude towards the other parties. In the 1970 strategy resolution and in resolutions tabled at earlier Assemblies, the Liberals had still rejected any cooperation with the major parties.[107] Believing Liberal breakthrough to be around the corner, the Assembly defined the party's role as one acting both inside and outside the political establishment. This began to shift over the 1970-1974 period.

As the party continued to succeed in by-elections between 1972 and 1974 and won a local election victory in Liverpool in the 1973 local elections, becoming the largest

103. Steed, "The Electoral Strategy of the Liberal Party," 86; Cook, *A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1984*, 158.
104. Steed, "The Electoral Strategy of the Liberal Party," 81.
105. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held on Friday 26th July 1974 at 7:30pm at the Victoria Road Church Institute, Leicester," 143.
106. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970," 5.
107. Ibid.

group on the local council amidst a national win of around 900 council seats, it looked more likely that the Liberals would hold the balance of power in the new Parliament.[108] The 1973 Assembly resolution on strategy declared that the party should look into the possible scenarios for government participation or influence on government policy in case the party held the balance of power.[109] A November 1973 Party Council paper discusses the possibilities at length. The document itself was open-ended, posing questions for the party to consider. It did, however, state a rudimentary negotiating position, including electoral reform.[110] This allowed Thorpe, after the February 1974 election, to negotiate with the Conservative Leader Ted Heath, although he was ultimately unsuccessful.

This sparked further discussion in the party. At Brantwood in June 1974, the Standing Committee discussed the issue again.[111] This time, it was concluded that the party should make clear the terms of its support before the general election rather than afterwards.[112] The same month, Thorpe infuriated the NEC by commenting in a broadcast that he would enter into a government of national unity.[113] Interestingly, while the NEC privately reprimanded Thorpe, his action publicly forced a resolution of the NEC on his terms.[114] The Liberals ruled out any coalition with either the Labour or Conservative Party separately, but agreed they would join a national government.[115]

Though the steps were clearly incremental, the shift from a total rejection of any cooperation whatsoever to support for a national government and open discussion on other options is significant. It presages later coalitions and inter-party agreements which the Liberals would enter into with Labour and further down the line, the SDP-Liberal Alliance. This relaxation of its strict role assumptions must be seen as part of an extension strategy – in order to increase the breadth of the party's appeal, it could no longer remain in the margins with the balance of power in its sights. As part of a broader package including the broad front and the attempt to make headway in the cities, it appears to be related to the mechanics of the electoral system and their consequences for party competition. After all, opportunities for a small party to make the difference were few and far between, and to make a meaningful impact, the party simply had to shift its strategy. The party's low electoral base attachment might also have figured into its preference for

108. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 201-202.
109. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at Southport 18th - 22nd September," 15-16.
110. A. Butt-Philip, M. Steed, and W. Wallace, "What About the Balance of Power?," Paper circulated to the Liberal Party Council in February 1974 (1974), p. 365-371, LIBERAL/3/2, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 365-371.
111. Liberal Party. Liberal Party Organisation, "After the Next Election: Report on the Standing Committee's Discussion at Brantwood" (1974), p. 277-280, LIBERAL/3/2, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 277-280.
112. Ibid., 280.
113. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 29th June 1974 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club," 174-175.
114. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Resolution passed by National Executive Committee, 29.6.74" (1974), p. 181, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Resolution passed by National Executive Committee, 29.6.74" (1974), p. 182, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London.
115. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Resolution passed by National Executive Committee, 29.6.74" (1974), p. 181, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London.

a broad front.

8.5 Conclusion

What happened after the Liberal defeat of 1970? The diffuse character of the response, the labyrinthine party organisation and the slow pace at which the recovery strategy picked up make a judgment on the case relatively difficult. Many of the changes summarised in table 8.2, especially those that concern the choice of coalition partners, only reveal their true importance when seen as part of a development that continues after 1974 with the Lib-Lab Pact, during which Thorpe's successor David Steel led his party to support the Labour government after it had lost its majority in 1977, and the Alliance with the SDP from 1981, eventually merging into the Liberal Democrats in 1988. Overall, it can be said that the Liberals followed a slow but sure shift away from the traditional position of rejecting any sort of accommodation with the major parties, leading to an extension strategy as expected on the basis of the identity of defectors and the constraints of FPTP. This was not the case in all parts of the strategy, though: in the field of party programme, the increasing emphasis on the idea of community politics, which had become firmly entrenched in Liberal discourse, constitutes a reinforcement strategy, focusing more on an issue that by now had become traditional.

The fact that the nature of the defeat as a crisis can be disputed due to the fact that the loss of votes did not match the loss of seats makes the Liberal case a means of testing the propositions on what makes parties decide whether to act. Though the literature has called the 1970 defeat "traumatic", the immediate action such a trauma would imply was not forthcoming.[116] The NEC, the Liberal Parliamentary Party and other organs seem to have been intent on carrying on or at least not to make major changes.[117] This may be due to the limited loss of votes, which made it possible to direct the blame for the seat loss to the electoral system rather than the party itself. More importantly, assembling an internal party coalition for change was made more complicated by the complex structures of the party organisation and the dispersed distribution of powers within them. Neither the NEC, the LPP nor the party council could effectively take the lead on its own.

Here another factor comes into play as well: the party's small size. The small size of the Liberal Party, combined with the FPTP electoral system, severely constrained the party's options. In fields such as candidate selection, organisation or even tactics, the party had a narrower array of alternatives open to it than the model assumed. This poses the question whether the model can serve to explain the actions of small parties like the Liberal Party or whether it is more suited to explaining the recovery strategies of major parties.

The small size of the Liberal Party and its dispersed support base can nevertheless by linked to the outcome of an overall extension strategy, especially in tactics. The Liberal Party's support is not just relatively small but also dispersed across the country

116. Mole, "Community Politics," 258.

117. Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting held 4th July 1970 at the National Liberal Club"; Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970," 5.

Table 8.2: Overview of the Liberal Party recovery strategy, 1970-1974

Cycle	**Organisational**	**Programmatic**	**Tactical**	**Overall**
First cycle, 1970-1974	Internal de-democratisation (*extension*) • Creation of national membership (*extension*) • Integration of regional party strategies into national whole (*extension*)	Highlight traditional values (*reinforcement*) • Party-wide campaigns on immigration and industrial relations (*reinforcement*) • Community politics strategy (*reinforcement*)	Broader targeting (*extension*) • 1974 election fought on "broadest front possible" (*extension*) • Focus on major cities (*extension*) • Discussions on balance of power situation (*extension*)	Extension
Second cycle, February-October 1974	Internal de-democratisation (*extension*) • Unchanged from previous cycle.	Highlight traditional values (*reinforcement*) • Community Politics not explicitly mentioned in manifesto; campaign guide mentions it "permeates all policies" (*reinforcement*)	Broader targeting (*extension*) • Support for cooperation with major parties in national government; other options discussed (*extension*)	Extension

both geographically and demographically. Quite apart from the fact that its ideological individualism leads to the rejection of having a base at all, an extension strategy is the logical result of its small size, especially since its electoral goals also involved forming a single-party majority government. After all, the party, due to its small size, cannot be picky about the voters it does or does not want. Wherever they won seats, be it in the countryside or in the cities, such as in Liverpool, the Liberals tried to latch onto the votes they won. Had they taken any different route, they would have lost their optimal course of action. Seen this way, the decision to pursue a broad front and focus on being able to campaign everywhere through a more coordinated organisation is indeed the result of the Liberal Party's relationship to its voters.

How, then, should the 'odd one out', the programmatic reinforcement strategy focusing on the traditional issue of community politics, be seen? The resolutions of the Liberal Assembly and the Party Council show that the programmatic efforts towards community politics were strongly informed by party members simply believing this idea to be right in ideological terms.[118] In other words: the strong attachment to Liberal ideology and the tradition of the party produced the strong focus on community politics. To many Liberals, community politics had become the core of the party. In addition, community politics was a convenient strategy to a party which was considerably more successful at the local than at the national level.

This analysis provides evidence for proposition 5a through 5c formulated in chapter 3 that the programmatic strategy is determined by ideological attachment whereas the organisational and tactical components are impacted more by electoral base attachment. In the case of the Liberal Party, this is clearly suggested by the evidence. The way the party related to its support in the country, both as a result of its dispersion and of the disadvantages imposed by the electoral system, led to a strategy that ended up as a tactical and organisational extension strategy. At the same time, the party's strong attachment to its ideological tradition led to the party championing what it regarded as its traditional issues. This provides further support for propositions 5a through 5c that the effects of electoral base attachment and ideological attachment on the recovery strategy are differential, with the former impacting the tactical and organisational areas and the latter impacting more strongly on the programmatic dimension.

118. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970," 5-6; Liberal Party Council, "Private Business Motions introduced at the Liberal Party Council held 24th of November 1973," 19; Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at Southport 18th - 22nd September," 15-16; Ellis, "A Community Politics Theme for the General Election," 286-291.

9 Comparative Analysis

9.1 Introduction

In chapters 5 through 8, evidence has been presented from four parties – the Dutch CDA and D66 and the British Labour and Liberal parties – going through an episode of electoral crisis. These cases have contributed vital data to this study's understanding of party change following an electoral shock. What remains is to conduct the comparative part of the analysis and synthesise all this information in order to validate the model in general and subject the specific propositions formulated in chapter three to an empirical test. On this basis, the validity of the assumptions of the model can be judged and its explanatory power ascertained.

To briefly reiterate the design of the study: case studies were conducted in four different parties across two different countries, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, selected respectively for their Proportional Representation (PR) and First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral systems, which had suffered an electoral shock. In each of these two countries, a party with high electoral base attachment and a party with low electoral base attachment were selected. The methodological approach essentially consists of a number of different Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) comparisons, comparing both within and between the countries. In these focused comparisons, the differences between the cases will point to the validity of each proposition and ultimately of the model as a whole.

In this chapter, therefore, the focus is on the similarities and differences between the cases, rather than the specific details of each case. This naturally leads to a different sort of argument that follows on from the facts of each case study, being concerned more with the occurrence of events across cases than the sequence within a case. Where evidence from each case study is used in this chapter, it is either to reinforce a pattern observed in the comparative evidence as a whole, to illustrate the argument or to suggest opportunities for refinement of rejected propositions. Because the details of each case, stated in the terms of the concepts developed in chapter three, provide the input for this analysis, table 9.1 provides an overview of the results in each case.

This chapter starts by examining the propositions in section 9.2. Following this check, the chapter will turn to the question of what this says about the model in general and the assumptions it makes. Going through the model step by step, various assumptions underlying the conception of party recovery strategies developed in chapter 3 will be checked to see if they accurately represent the empirical reality. The model's explanatory power will be compared to that of a model based on the control variable of the identity of the defectors, so as to demonstrate that institutional factors matter more to the choice of a party's recovery strategy than more rational and functional ones. Finally, section 9.4 delivers a short conclusion on the model's overall validity and explanatory power, leaving

Table 9.1: Case-by-case summary of findings

	CDA 1994-2002	**Labour 1983-1992**	**D66 1982-1989**	**Liberals 1970-1974**
Country	Netherlands	UK	Netherlands	UK
'whether'-stage				
Size of defeat as % of prev. seats	37%	20%	65%	50%
Previous crisis?	No	No	Yes, 1972	Yes, 1951
Diagnosed crisis	Yes	Yes, hesitantly.	Yes	Yes, hesitantly.
'how'-stage, first electoral cycle				
Electoral base attachment	Strong	Strong	Weak	Weak
Ideological attachment	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Previous election	Above average (+2,9%)	Below average (-4%)	Above average (+4,7%)	Above average (+2,4%)
Programmatic dimension	Highlight traditional values	Highlight traditional values	Downplay, then highlight traditional values	Highlight traditional values
Organisational dimension	Internal democratisation	Internal democratisation	Internal de-democratisation	Internal de-democratisation
Tactical dimension	Broader targeting, with reinforcement elements	Broader targeting	Narrower targeting	Broader targeting
Overall strategy	Reinforcement	Reinforcement	Reinforcement	Extension
'how'-stage, second electoral cycle				
Electoral system	PR	FPTP	PR	FPTP
Programmatic dimension	Highlight traditional values	Downplay traditional values	Highlight traditional values	Highlight traditional values
Organisation dimension	Internal democratisation	External democratisation	Internal de-democratisation	Internal de-democratisation
Tactical dimension	Broader targeting	Broader targeting	Narrower targeting	Broader targeting
Overall strategy	Reinforcement	Extension	Reinforcement	Extension

the broader implications to be judged in the final chapter of this dissertation.

9.2 Examining the propositions

Let us now turn to examining each specific proposition to see how the model performs at the task it was designed to do: to explain the variety of actions various parties take following an external shock. The analysis moves from the general level to the specific, presenting first the overall configuration of the variables, then noting specific evidence from each case to further inform the assessment of the proposition. This has the benefit of being able to highlight details and nuances from the case studies where they are relevant and, in the case of rejected propositions, the ability to use information gained from using the model in a heuristic manner to see whether and how they might be refined. It should be noted, before each of these propositions in considered in turn, that not all of these comparisons are ideally designed according to the principles of a Most Similar Systems comparative research design, since by and large the cases were not selected to be similar on all variables except for the dependent and independent variables. Nevertheless, these more focused comparisons will no doubt yield viable insights as we shall examine each proposition in turn.

9.2.1 Proposition 1: relative size of the defeat

The first propositions (1 and 2) derived from the model do not concern the choice of strategy, but the theoretical possibility that a party does not change at all. Though the literature has provided a large degree of support to the idea that parties do change after external shocks (see chapter two), this was still a step that had to be taken. The first proposition is the one most straightforwardly derived from the earlier models of shock-induced party change: that the larger the size of the defeat, the more likely it is that a party will diagnose a crisis. It is, in effect, a restatement of the performance hypothesis formulated by Harmel and Janda that the poorer a party's performance towards its goals, the more likely it is to change.[1] The goal, in this case, whatever it may be, is mediated by electoral performance. The size of each of the shock defeat as a percentage of seats and votes lost is listed in table 9.3[2].

All parties, in the end, diagnosed a crisis and acted on it by formulating a strategy (see chapters 5 through 8). Of course, this was more or less inherent in the case selection, which only selected parties which had suffered a shock and were therefore likely to diagnose a crisis in the first place. Strictly speaking, therefore, the proposition could not be approached by means of between-case comparison, since there were no cases in which the parties did not act on the shock. However, there have certainly been differences which could be seen to be significant in their relationship to this hypothesis. In chapter three,

1. R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 280.

2. Based on data from H. Döring and P. Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)," Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, `http://www.parlgov.org`.

Table 9.2: Summary of propositions

'Whether'-stage

1. The higher the proportion of votes or seats lost in the shock electoral defeat relative to the last election, the greater the pressure towards change will be, and therefore the higher the probabolity that a party will diagnose a crisis.

2. When a party has previously experienced a defeat which meets the threshold set for a crisis, this will strengthen the case for change and therefore increase the probability that a party will diagnose a crisis.

Internal factors

3. Parties which have higher levels of electoral base attachment are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy; those with lower levels the extension strategy.

4. Parties which have higher levels of ideological attachment are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy; those with lower levels the extension strategy.

5. Electoral base attachment impacts the organisational and tactical dimensions more than the programmatic dimension, while ideological attachment impacts the programmatic dimension more than the organisational and tactical dimensions, leading to the following concrete expectations:
   a) Parties with a higher electoral base attachment tend to favour organisational reforms shifting power towards the membership, whereas those with lower electoral base attachment tend to favour organisational reforms shifting power away from the membership.
   b) Parties with a higher electoral base attachment tend to favour their core constituency, whereas those with lower electoral base attachment tend to favour a broader constituency.
   c) Parties with a higher ideological attachment tend to highlight their traditional values, whereas parties with a lower ideological attachment tend to downplay their traditional values.

External factors

6. Parties under FPTP are more likely to pursue the extension strategy; parties under PR are more likely to pursue the reinforcement strategy.

Table 9.3: Percentage of votes and seats lost in crisis election

Party (election)		**Previous result**	**Crisis result**	**Percentage lost**
CDA (1994)	*Seats*	54	34	37%
	% of votes	35,3%	22,2%	37%
Labour (1983)	*Seats*	261	209	20
	% of votes	36,9%	27,6%	25%
D66 (1982)	*Seats*	17	6	65%
	% of votes	11,1%	4,3%	61%
Liberals (1970)	*Seats*	12	6	50%
	% of votes	8,6%	7,5%	13%

the diagnosis of crisis represented the tendency towards change resulting from the shock overcoming the party's resistance to change. Since some parties took longer to diagnose a crisis than others, in these cases apparently it was harder to form a consensus for change. If these differences coincide with the numerical heaviness of the defeat, they would provide some limited support for the first proposition.

The differences are significant. In the cases of CDA and D66, the national committees of both parties started the process soon after the election and led up to a review that very clearly defined the electoral performance as a problem.[3] In the case of the Liberal Party, the first post-election meeting of the NEC was more upbeat, noting that morale was high despite the losses and apparently blaming these losses on the electoral system.[4] After the party's defeat in 1983, leading figures in Britain's Labour Party also appeared to have trouble apportioning blame to their present approach, preferring to blame the press in several sources.[5]

For the British Labour Party, the relatively small size of their actual losses seems a reasonable explanation for this hesitation. However, in rank order of seat losses, the Liberals come above one of the two Dutch immediate responders and still appear to take longer to form a coalition for change. If we introduce votes into the equation, however, this disappears. Going on votes rather than seats, both the Liberals and Labour lost

3. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie" (1994), inventory nr. 1678, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague; Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 6 mei 1994, gehouden in vergadercentrum 'Hoog Brabant' te Utrecht," Minutes of the National Committee, 6th of May 1994 (1994), PB/9453193V/ps, inventory nr. 1678, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague, 4; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag Bijeenkomst "Aanzet Partijdiskussie Politiek" op maandag 4 oktober 1982," Minutes of the Advisory Group, 4th of October 1982 (1982), inventory nr. 45, Archives of Democrats 66, Algemene Ledenvergadering (ALV), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University; B. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," *Democraat* 15, no. 7 (1982): 17–21.

4. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting held 4th July 1970 at the National Liberal Club" (1970), p. 93-99, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London.

5. M. Foot, "Manifesto Will Prove Right," *Labour Weekly*, July 17, 1983, though these include members of the outgoing leadership, they still appear to reflect a dominant pattern of thinking. Accessed at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester; H. Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim," *Labour Weekly*, July 17, 1983, Accessed at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

Table 9.4: Previous shock defeats at 33% vote or seat loss threshold

Party	**Number of previous crisis defeats (years)**
Liberal Party	1 (1951)
Democrats 66	1 (1972)
Labour Party	0
Christian Democratic Appeal	0

significantly less at 11% and 25% of their vote shares respectively. Looking at the vote shares of both Dutch parties, there is support for the proposition regarding the size of the defeat. This might be due to the fact that it is easier to argue that no major change is needed if one of two performance indicators – votes or seats – is not as bad as the other. This, in turn, suggests that the resistance that parties have to overcome is rather high. It appears that the effect is strongest when both votes or seats are impacted, leaving no doubt as to whether the party's electoral potential has been compromised and making it harder to credibly apportion blame primarily to some factor outside the party. However, since all parties in the end diagnosed a crisis, however hesitantly, a loss of either votes or seats in excess of 33% still appears to constitute a sufficient condition.

9.2.2 Proposition 2: learning effect

The second proposition concerned a learning effect: if a party had experienced a shock defeat before, it would be more likely to diagnose a crisis after suffering the electoral shock under study. The same caveats apply here as in section 9.2.1. above: all parties did diagnose a crisis. However, some did it faster and more explicitly than others. Does such a learning effect exist in the four cases under study in this dissertation? To answer this question, table 9.4[6] contains an overview of all the elections between 1945 and the crisis under study at which a party had suffered a defeat above the 33% threshold in votes or seats.

Matching this data up to what has been said above about the two parties which immediately diagnosed the crisis and the two which experienced a bit more hesitation, there does not appear to have been a learning effect. The Liberal Party appeared very optimistic after the 1970 electoral defeat, as did the Labour Party – both fall on opposite sides of the line. The same goes for immediate responders CDA (no prior crisis defeats) and D66 (a single crisis in 1972). This would mean that the evidence does not support proposition 2, which is therefore rejected.

9.2.3 Proposition 3: the impact of electoral base attachment

The relationship between electoral base attachment and the initial choice of strategy appears to be rather murky. Proposition 3 states that parties with higher levels of electoral base attachment are more likely to go with a reinforcement strategy, whereas those with lower levels of electoral base attachment are more likely to pursue an extension strategy.

6. Based on data from Döring and Manow, "Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov)."

Table 9.5: First-cycle recovery strategy and electoral base attachment per party

Party	**Electoral base attachment**	**Expected strategy**	**Observed strategy, first cycle**
CDA, 1994-1998	Strong	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Labour, 1983-1987	Strong	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
D66, 1982-1986	Weak	Extension	Reinforcement
Liberals, 1970-1974	Weak	Extension	Extension

Since both the CDA and Labour have a high level of electoral base attachment in common (the former through personal ties, the latter through the formal role played by the trade unions, which was reinforced in both cases by informal norms), the expectation for them generated by the theory is that they should pursue a reinforcement strategy in the first electoral cycle. Similarly, both D66 and the Liberal Party have a lower level of electoral base attachment, evidenced in norms against pleading the interests of a specific group of voters, which is conducive to an extension strategy. How do these expectations stack up against the observations?

As shown in table 9.5, both the high-attachment parties also started their recovery strategies by pursuing a reinforcement strategy. Between 1983 and the 1987 election, Labour pursued a reinforcement strategy on two out of three dimensions of the strategy, with the puzzling exception of the tactical dimension (see section 9.2.5). Its focus on its traditional values and issues, combined with the push for One Member, One Vote (OMOV) measures to empower the membership, point towards a focus on the party's core voters that puts it in the reinforcement column. Likewise, though the CDA also attempted to reach out to those of non-Christian faiths (thus also pursuing an extension strategy on the tactical dimension), it conducted a Policy Review highlighting its Christian democratic principles and also introduced some OMOV reforms to its organisation. Although both parties also took extension-based measures, they still lean towards the reinforcement side. This would mean that, going purely on the configuration of the overall strategies, these two cases support proposition 3.

The resistance encountered in both cases is also evidence that electoral base attachment impacted in some way. Though they both used their advantage in internal power struggles, such as the introduction of a non-amendable policy review, the leaderships of CDA and Labour were not always successful in their aims.[7] Sometimes this resistance is better explained by internal vested interests, as seen in the struggle they both faced for OMOV and reform of the party organisation.[8] However, at other times, it is the result

7. As described in more detail in the relevant chapters, in both Labour and the CDA it would take the full two electoral cycles and multiple iterations of the organizational reforms before OMOV, for instance, could be implemented. This can be put down mostly to internal resistance.

8. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Resumé van de vergadering van het CDA-Partijbestuur d.d. 14 oktober 1994," Minutes of the National Committee, 14th of October 1994 (1994), PB/9453766V/ps, inventory nr. 1680, Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA): Partij, 1980-2000, voorlopige toegang, Nationaal Archief, the Hague; Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, "One Member, One Vote: Realities behind the slogan" (1984), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

of attachment to the party as in a privileged relationship with respectively a Christian or working-class base. Even the reforming Labour leadership went out of their way to maintain the link to the trade unions, with review after review being set up to resolve this question, because they could not (and maybe did not want to) get around the influence of the unions in pushing for OMOV.[9] The eventual external democratisation of the leadership elections is related to this.[10] On the other side of the Channel, the CDA was criticised by its own members and national committee members for reaching out to those of different faiths, as they felt it threatened the party's Christian identity.[11] This clearly shows electoral base attachment works to condition the way parties respond to a crisis, working at the level of the membership as well as the leadership.

While both high-attachment cases conform to expectations, the same cannot be said of the low-attachment cases. Both D66 and the Liberal Party can be said not only to lack a sizeable and well–defined base, but also to some extent to lack a desire to obtain one. They are both liberal parties with an individualist idea of politics. However, both parties pursued a different recovery strategy at the end of the first cycle. The Liberal Party, though returning to its traditional issues as part of a strong focus on community politics, also sought to broaden its base by increasing its chances of power, qualifying its refusal to work with the major parties.[12] It also concentrated some of the power in its decentralised party organisation by increasing efforts at coordination at the national level.[13] This means that on two out of three dimensions, it pursued an extension strategy as expected.

In a snapshot of the recovery strategy as it was just before the 1986 election, D66 does indeed pursue a reinforcement strategy on two out of three dimensions, contradicting expectations. However, the picture is more complicated than that. At the start of the first cycle, the programmatic efforts made by the party sought to broaden the party's programmatic profile by downplaying the importance of political democracy and broadening

9. Labour Party, Franchise Review Group (Working Party on the Franchise), "Party Franchise for the Selection and Reselection of Parliamentary Candidates" (1987), Franchise Review Group Papers, Personal Papers of Dianne Hayter, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester; Labour Party, Trade Union Links Review Group, "Trade Unions and the Labour Party: Final Report of the Review Group on Links between Trade Unions and the Labour Party" (1992), Archives of the Trade Union Links Review Group, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

10. Labour, TULRG, "Trade Unions and the Labour Party."

11. Christen-Democratisch Appèl, National Committee, "Besluitenlijst van het Partijbestuur van het CDA d.d. 17 november 2000," Conclusions of the National Committee Meeting, 17th of November 2000 (2000), Anonymous Personal Archive consisting of National Committee Minutes, CDA Central Office, the Hague, 4.

12. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Resolution passed by National Executive Committee, 29.6.74" (1974), p. 181, LIBERAL/1/16, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London.

13. Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 28th of November 1970 at 10am at the National Liberal Club" (1970), p. 119-126, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 123; Liberal Party. National Executive Committee, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 30th of October 1971 at 1pm at the National Liberal Club" (1971), p. 183-188, LIBERAL/1/6, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 186; Liberal Party. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at the Liberal Party Assembly 1970" (1970), LIBERAL/8/4, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 5.

its concept of democratisation.[14] Combined with the extension strategy pursued on the organisational dimension, this means that the initial form of the strategy leaned more towards extension. This changed after the return of Van Mierlo, under whose leadership the party chose to highlight political reform as its "reason to exist" instead. With all three dimensions weighted equally, this change of direction puts D66 on the reinforcement side. If we take the fact that initial efforts leaned more towards extension as an indication of initial preferences, then this provides some limited support for proposition 3. However, this can only be said to be the case if the electoral system or ideological attachment produced the change of direction. We shall return to this in sections 9.2.4. and 9.2.6.

Because D66 does not conform to the expectation that a weak electoral base attachment leads to an extension strategy, proposition 3 has to be rejected. However, what the evidence above also shows is that while the simple expression of the relationship in the proposition must be rejected, we have learned something about the complex reality behind the model. Electoral base attachment does not appear entirely unrelated to the choice of strategy, just not as straightforwardly as the model presumes. The case of D66 shows this: the party did start off on an extension strategy, and its first-cycle strategy only shifted towards a reinforcement strategy after the return of Van Mierlo to the leadership. This suggests that there might have been some sort of relationship between electoral base attachment and the choice of strategy: after all, the first steps the party made did follow expectations. However, given the mixed picture of the case overall and the fact that by the end of the first cycle, the strategy looked rather different (whether that is due to electoral system influences or some other factor like the party's strong attachment to its ideology), this effect cannot be as strong as the proposition presumes. This more nuanced relationship arising from the within-case evidence therefore provides useful information in refining the model, while at the same time showing that the proposition does not cut it and that such refinement is therefore needed.

9.2.4 Proposition 4: the role of ideology

When reviewing the evidence in all parties, the role of ideology stands out. Despite the differences in electoral base attachment, all parties score high on ideological attachment, as shown in table 9.6. Labour's commitment to democratic socialism by the 1980s was evident in the way in which the 1983 manifesto and unpopular commitments like unilateral nuclear disarmament were defended.[15] The CDA was seen as one of Europe's more principled Christian Democratic parties,[16] and the Gardeniers evaluation report shows a

14. A. Nuis, "Het Democratisch Manifest: een nieuw hoofdstuk: de plaats van D'66 in 1983," *Democraat* 16, no. 1 (1983): 9–16; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Beleidshoofdstuk Informatiebeleid," *Democraat* 15, no. 8 (1982): 17–18; Democraten 66, National Committee, "Adelt arbeid? Een visie op de plaats van arbeid in een tijd van grote werkloosheid" (1984), Attachment to *Democraat* 17(2).

15. Labour Party, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; Foot, "Manifesto Will Prove Right"; Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim."

16. J.-E. Lane and S. O. Ersson, *Politics and Society in Western Europe* (London: Sage, 1994), 149; D. Hanley, "Introduction: Christian Democracy as a Political Phenomenon," in *Christian Democracy in Europe: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. D. Hanley (London and New York: Pinter, 1994), 5; M. Ten Hooven, "Een machtspartij met idealen: Een geschiedenis van het CDA, 1980-2010," in *De Conjunctuur*

Table 9.6: First-cycle recovery strategy and ideological attachment per party

Party	**Ideological attachment**	**Expected strategy**	**Observed strategy, first cycle**
CDA, 1994-1998	Strong	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Labour, 1983-1987	Strong	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
D66, 1982-1986	Strong	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Liberals, 1970-1974	Strong	Reinforcement	Extension

strong confidence in the ideological concept of the 'responsible society'. Both the Liberal Party and D66 were convinced that their own set of ideas was the right one, with D66 figuring as ideologically attached to rejecting ideology.[17] This presents a problem: since we have no cases of low ideological attachment, it is impossible to approach proposition 4 through between-case analysis. However, the tentative evidence from the case studies, when seen in relation to each other, does allow a few tentative conclusions and insights about the relationship expressed by the proposition.

Recall that proposition 4 with regards to ideology was that parties with a higher degree of ideological attachment are more likely to pursue a reinforcement strategy, while those with lower degrees of ideological attachment are more likely to go with an extension strategy. Here an immediate problem reveals itself for the hypothesis, since all parties can be seen as strongly attached to their ideologies. Since all parties pursued different strategies at the outset, judged on the whole, this leads to the tentative conclusion that there is a problem with the proposition. After all, for the proposition in its most simple formulation to be confirmed, all parties should have pursued a reinforcement strategy. This is evidently not the case. However, without low-attachment cases, we cannot judge whether this deviation is due to another variable having a greater influence or due to ideology having no influence at all.

The within-case analysis presents more detailed insights that can be of use in making this judgment when refining the model. Looking in greater detail at the cases, the influence of ideology shows in each case in different ways. The idea that the party's belief system is a strength occurs in all cases except the Labour one. In this latter case, ideological attachment was arguably weakest, since it was only shared by powerful parts of the party rather than inherent in the party's tradition. For the CDA, it was a continuing belief in the relevance of the Christian democratic ideology that contributed to an overall reinforcement strategy.[18] For D66, the strength of its non-dogmatic identification and its position opposed to the major parties of the day prevailed after the return of Van Mierlo,

van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 170; G. Voerman, "Inleiding," in *De Conjunctuur van de Macht: het Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1980-2010*, ed. G. Voerman (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 9-11.

17. W. Wallace, "Survival and Revival," in *Liberal Party Politics*, ed. V. Bogdanor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 48; D. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 171; M. S. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie: de Geschiedenis van D66, 1966-2003* (Den Haag: SDU, 2003).

18. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 11-12.

leading to comments such as "our line is old and good".[19] In the Liberal case, Liberal activists were absolutely convinced that liberal principles, specifically the relatively recent idea of community politics, would bring the party to power.[20]

In the case of D66, ideology is potentially a stronger force than electoral base attachment at the outset, and this forms one of two candidate explanations for the fact that despite its weak electoral base attachment, it still ended the first cycle on a predominantly reinforcement-based strategy (the other being an early electoral influence). Though the party was not very attached to the idea of having a base, it still formulated what was essentially a reinforcement strategy in the first electoral cycle. In part, this might be due to the fact that for D66, the aversion to the pillars was part of its programmatic basis, clouding the distinction.[21] As a programmatic party rather than an interest party by tradition, one could say the ideological variable took precedence.[22] Still, the same could be said of the Liberal Party in the eyes of many Liberal activists and leaders, for whom the programme naturally formed a sustaining motivation, and it bears keeping in mind that the Liberals pursued an extension strategy.[23]

Insofar as we can test proposition 4, there is a problem with the stated relationship between ideological attachment and the choice of strategy. However, the case studies provide more complex ways in which ideology does seem to have some effect that can be helpful in our understanding of party recovery strategies.This influence appears in two ways: first, as the arguments offered above illustrate, ideology often serves to strengthen existing pressures towards a reinforcement strategy. This was strongest, naturally, in parties which were formed from mass-integration movements, where at least to some the ideology was naturally tied in with its social base. The high degree of ideological attachment strengthens electoral base attachment in these cases. In the case of D66, meanwhile, its strong ideological attachment also strengthened the reinforcement strategy, and was arguably even stronger than the pressure its weak electoral base attachment contributed towards the extension strategy. Secondly, and this shall be the subject of the next section, there is the possibility that ideology impacts more strongly on the programmatic dimension. It is this latter conclusion which is the more important of the two.

9.2.5 Propositions 5a through 5c: differential impacts

As noted previously, the picture as regards the first electoral cycle and the initial responses of parties is rather messy, and no party pursued the same strategy on all three dimensions.

19. M. Ten Brink, "Campagneplan 1986: Concept Campagneplan 1986 t.b.v. Gemeenteraads- en Tweede Kamerverkiezingen, oktober 1985," Draft Campaign Plan for 1986 (1985), HB.DB-85/196A, inventory nr. 92, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 8.

20. Liberal Party. Party Council, "Private Business Motions introduced at the Liberal Party Council held 24th of November 1973" (1973), p. 18-19, LIBERAL/3/1, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 19; Liberal Party, "Change the Face of Britain: the Liberal Party Manifesto 1974," 1974, accessed November 21, 2017, `http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lib74feb.htm`.

21. Van der Land, *Tussen Ideaal en Illusie*, 15.

22. Ibid., 408.

23. Dutton, *A History of the Liberal Party since 1900*, 171.

Table 9.7: First-cycle organisational strategy and electoral base attachment per party

Party	**Electoral base attachment**	**Expected strategy (organisational)**	**Observed strategy (organisational)**
CDA, 1994-1998	Strong	Shift towards members (reinforcement)	Shift towards members (limited OMOV)
Labour, 1983-1987	Strong	Shift towards members (reinforcement)	Shift towards members (first attempts at OMOV)
D66, 1982-1986	Weak	Shift away from members (extension)	Shift away from members (increased coordination)
Liberals, 1970-1974	Weak	Shift away from members (extension)	Shift away from members (increased coordination)

This is in part due to the nature of the reinforcement-extension distinction as a continuous scale, which is simplified by letting the majority of the dimensions decide the strategy. When we look at the first-cycle strategies of both parties as a representation of their initial inclinations before an electoral re-evaluation, it turns out that taken as a whole, neither proposition 3 on electoral base attachment or proposition 4 on ideological attachment fits the observations entirely. However, this problem of the impact of various influences was foreseen in the exposition of the model in chapter three, and another solution offered: disaggregating the strategy into its component dimensions. This is where proposition 5 and its sub-propositions 5a through 5c come in, based on the idea that ideological attachment impacts more on the programmatic dimension, while electoral base attachment impacts more on the organisational and tactical dimensions, respectively. This will be approached by making comparisons between the cases based on the respective independent variables, relating them to the dimensions in question.

Proposition 5a states that parties with a strong electoral base attachment tend to shift power towards their membership, whereas those with weak electoral base attachment tend to favour organisational changes shifting power away from them. In table 9.7, this expectation is borne out, leading to the conclusion that this proposition must be confirmed. Both CDA and Labour, in their first electoral cycle following the defeat, started pursuing reforms to empower their membership with One Member, One Vote (OMOV) decision-making. In the cases of the Liberal Party and D66, the trend was actually the opposite: both parties concentrated an (admittedly limited) amount of power in the hands of the leadership to ease coordination by the leadership. External democratisation was not pursued, which is relatively unsurprising: in the 1970s or 1980s, the concept was virtually unheard of in general.

The pursuit of OMOV in the CDA and Labour cases, in particular, supports the idea of a relationship between these reforms and these parties' strong electoral base attachment.

In the Labour Party, the empowerment of the membership was a way for the leadership to reach out to party supporters who believed the party had drifted away from their concerns.[24] For the CDA, the Gardeniers report gave much the same reasoning for rebalancing the relationship between leaders and members in the favour of the latter, reasoning that its large membership could be an asset in winning over the people in the country.[25] This matches the reasoning given in chapter three for assigning such reforms to empower the membership to the reinforcement strategy: members, being part of the party's most loyal base of support, will help the party take decisions which makes the party more attractive to its social base.

The within-case evidence is weaker when it comes to the other side of the equation, but both D66 and the Liberals diagnosed to varying degrees that their decentralised and dispersed party organisations hindered the breadth of the party's electoral appeal.[26] The fact that they acted accordingly (albeit circumspectly and not entirely successfully because they also valued their respective party's democratic principles) lends support to the proposition, but it could be stronger.

Proposition 5b presents a serious problem. If we compare the proposition that parties with a strong electoral base attachment should pursue a narrower tactical focus whereas those with a weak electoral base attachment should pursue a broader one to the evidence from the four cases, the picture as shown in table 9.8 looks nothing like the expected state of events. Since only the Liberal Party and to a rather limited extent the CDA conform to expectations, the only possible conclusion is that proposition 5b is to be rejected.

This is particularly problematic given that, theoretically speaking, this should be the most straightforward relationship between electoral base attachment and any of the three dimensions. The model presumes that if a party is strongly attached to its electoral base, it should pursue a strategy that plays to this electoral base. Since the tactical dimension represents the composition of the party's intended audience, it is very odd that on this dimension in particular, this does not appear to be the case. This problem was encountered in almost all cases, leading to various possible ways to account for the divergence from the model's expectations. These will be considered in turn. The first of these ways is that the preferences of the actor controlling strategy (often closer to the parliamentary party) are more concerned with short-term demands of the electoral system and therefore acting more opportunistically. This appears to have been what happened in the Labour case, as suggested by leadership memos which suggest Kinnock was aware of many of the weaknesses of Labour's narrow appeal from the start.[27]

Another possibility is that the tactical dimension is more influenced by the question who defected in the shock election. This does not appear to be the case, however. In

24. C. Clarke, "Reselection - Issues and Possibilities" (n.d.), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; Labour Party, Leader's Office, "A Note on Re-Selection" (1984), KNNK 2/1/55, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; N. Kinnock, "Letter from Neil Kinnock to MPs opposed to Franchise Extension" (1984), KNNK 2/1/56, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

25. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 11-12; 38-39.

26. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid"; Liberal Party, NEC, "Minutes of the NEC meeting held 28th of November 1970 at 10am at the National Liberal Club," 123.

27. P. Hain, "Memo on leadership strategy" (1983), KNNK 2/1/20, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

Table 9.8: First-cycle tactical strategy and electoral base attachment per party

Party	**Electoral base attachment**	**Expected strategy (tactical)**	**Observed strategy (tactical)**
CDA, 1994-1998	Strong	Narrower targeting (reinforcement)	Broader targeting, with narrower elements (intercultural appeal, big cities)
Labour, 1983-1987	Strong	Narrower targeting (reinforcement)	Broader appeal (red rose logo, focus on floating vote)
D66, 1982-1986	Weak	Broader targeting (extension)	Narrower appeal ("same votes as before")
Liberals, 1970-1974	Weak	Broader targeting (extension)	Broader appeal (broad front, acceptance of balance of power)

the D66 case, the evaporation of the 1981 gains, which suggests that most defectors were non-core voters, was followed up by narrower appeal rather than a broader one. In the case of the Labour Party, the reverse is true: despite the fact that the party's performance in 1983 was far below its average performance over the past 5 elections and therefore likely due to the defection of core voters, the party pursued a broader appeal. However, the reality of partisan dealignment could well be a factor. Both Labour and the CDA were aware that their base was growing smaller over time[28] and, in the case of Labour, lured away by the competition.[29] This would make it a sensible strategy to try to broaden the base, even if the parties' internal characteristics inclined them in another direction on the programmatic and organisational dimensions. Similarly, the Liberals were also faced with an external reality which might have driven them to opt for an extension strategy on the tactical dimension. They realized they could not win a majority outright, and chose to entertain the possibility of a balance-of-power situation, potentially increasing their viability in the eyes of the voters.[30] This suggests that since the tactical dimension is most directly related to the electoral arena, various aspects of the external environment

28. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," p. 13.

29. Labour Party, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters" (1985), KNNK 2/1/71, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; Labour Party, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters" (', 1985), KNNK 2/1/71, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

30. A. Butt-Philip, M. Steed, and W. Wallace, "What About the Balance of Power?," Paper circulated to the Liberal Party Council in February 1974 (1974), p. 365-371, LIBERAL/3/2, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 365-371; Liberal Party. Liberal Party Organisation, "After the Next Election: Report on the Standing Committee's Discussion at Brantwood" (1974), p. 277-280, LIBERAL/3/2, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 277-280

might have an earlier impact on this dimension.

This alternative explanation of the choices made by the CDA and Labour might work for these parties, but it does not work in the case of D66. If the same logic as above were extended to D66, its lack of a social base should lead to the party broadening its base like the others, since its lack of a base was a serious liability. This difference can possibly be explained by the central role in D66 of its programme. Arguably, for D66 the question of who to appeal to was secondary to its programme – and hence, since the program was not going to change to accommodate a broader base, it led to a reinforcement strategy.[31] It should also be noted that towards 1989, D66 saw its way towards extending its base with former VVD voters in a more opportunistic way.[32] Perhaps the best way to see the development of D66's tactical strategy is to point out that D66's character as a programmatic party led to a strong preference against looking for a clear social base at the expense of the party's programme.

Let us, finally, turn to the relationship between ideological attachment and the programmatic parts of the recovery strategy. The same problem applies for proposition 5c that strong ideological attachment leads a party to highlight its traditional issues whereas weak ideological attachment leads to downplaying them as for proposition 4: since all four cases show a high degree of ideological attachment, it is strictly speaking impossible to use a between-case comparison to examine the proposition. When one looks at the first-cycle programmatic strategies of the four parties as shown in table 9.9, all the observed strategies at the end of the first electoral cycle are in line with the expectation that, based on their high ideological attachment, they would pursue a strategy highlighting their traditional values rather than downplaying them. This shows support for proposition 5c in the data, but at the same time this support can only be tentative without a case in which ideological attachment is low showing the opposite tendency.

Disaggregating the strategies certainly has had some success. Propositions 5a and 5c give support, even with all the caveats applying to the latter, to the expected way in which these characteristics of the four parties impacts certain parts of the strategy. However, the rejection of proposition 5b does represent a problem, since complexity rears its head precisely in the area that should theoretically have been the most straightforward relationship. Because of this, the main statement of proposition 5 also has to be rejected, since electoral base attachment was not seen to have a relationship with the tactical part of the strategy. Only the Liberal Party case lined up fully with all three propositions. However, the problem has been localised, which means that we know where it did and

31. Democraten 66, National Executive, "Verslag van de vergadering van het Dagelijks Bestuur, gehouden op dinsdag 26 augustus 1986 te Den Haag," Minutes of the National Executive committee meeting held 26th August 1986 (1986), HB.DB-86/117, inventory nr. 98, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Archives of Democrats 66, Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University.

32. Democraten 66, National Committee, "Verslag van het HB/Fractie-weekend, gehouden op 13 en 14 juni te Leusden," Minutes of the Weekend Meeting of the Parliamentary Party and the National Committee held 13rd and 14th of June 1986 (1986), HB.DB-86/116, inventory nr. 98, Archives of Democrats 66, Hoofdbestuur/Dagelijks Bestuur (1970/1990), Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties, Groningen University, 1.

33. With the caveat that initially the party tried to capitalize on topical issues, but never really succeeded.

Table 9.9: First-cycle programmatic strategy and ideological attachment per party

Party	**Ideological attachment**	**Expected strategy (programmatic)**	**Observed strategy (programmatic)**
CDA, 1994-1998	Strong	Highlight Traditional values (reinforcement)	Highlight Traditional values (family values, Policy Review)
Labour, 1983-1987	Strong	Highlight Traditional values (reinforcement)	Highlight Traditional values (NHS, industrial policy)
D66, 1982-1986	Strong	Highlight Traditional values (reinforcement)	Highlight Traditional values[33] (democratisation, individualisation)
Liberals, 1970-1974	Strong	Highlight Traditional values (reinforcement)	Highlight Traditional values (community politics)

did not work, and where it must be refined. In general, this result underscores the need for further research into the detail of party recovery strategies, especially in looking at the complex relationship between the party's tactical recovery strategy, their external environment and their degree of electoral base attachment. Looking at the evidence presented above from the within-case studies, this is exactly where the model should be refined.

9.2.6 Proposition 6: electoral system

Sequencing is crucial to the examination of proposition 6. After all, the electoral system is conceptualised as a constraint on parties' initial preferences. This means that where the initial preferences of a party lead it to adopt a course that runs counter to the demands of the electoral system, the passage of time should see it shift towards the opposite strategy. This is operationalised in a rough way by comparing the two electoral cycles following the crisis: if the electoral system works as proposed, the second cycle should show the strategy demanded by the electoral system, even if the first cycle ends up showing the opposite strategy. Following the wording of the proposition, we have moved back to the aggregate strategies, as the effect of the electoral system is expected across the board.

The configuration of the cases in table 9.10 appears encouraging, as all the second-cycle strategies behave as expected: both Dutch cases end up with a reinforcement strategy, whereas both British cases end up with an extension strategy. However, it also becomes apparent that the British evidence is stronger than the Dutch evidence: Labour clearly

34. Significantly, before the return of Van Mierlo, the strategy looked more like an extension strategy.

Table 9.10: Electoral system and recovery strategies over two electoral cycles

Party	**Electoral system (expected effect)**	**First-cycle observed strategy**	**Second-cycle observed strategy**
CDA, 1994-1998	PR (reinforcement)	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Labour, 1983-1987	FPTP (extension)	Reinforcement	Extension
D66, 1982-1986	PR (reinforcement)	Reinforcement[34]	Reinforcement
Liberals, 1970-1974	FPTP (extension)	Extension	Extension

changed direction from a reinforcement strategy to an extension strategy, whereas the CDA and D66, at least when comparing the strategies as they were at the end of both cycles, do not change strategy. The operationalisation of the sequencing by comparing the two cycles, therefore, does not seem to yield enough data to conclusively assess the effect of the PR system. After all, if the strategy does not change between the first and second cycles, we do not know whether the final strategy can be attributed to the electoral system, the party's internal characteristics, or both.

This is where the within-case analysis reveals its importance. When we zoom in on the case of D66, we find a more nuanced picture that does potentially offer support for the proposition. As was recounted in chapter 7, the first cycle in the case of D66 is unusual because the chronology of the strategy suggests that the party first followed an extension strategy, then switched to a reinforcement strategy. The pivotal event was the return of the party's first leader, Hans van Mierlo, to the leadership. The evidence surrounding the ascension of Van Mierlo to the leadership suggests that this was due to expected electoral difficulty, indicated by disappointing opinion polls. The evidence is still not as strong as in the British Labour case, where explicit reference was made to the mechanics of the electoral system in motivating crucial decisions. However, it does suggest an electoral element to the change in strategy heralded by Van Mierlo's return, which lends support to the proposition.

Other single-case studies conducted for this dissertation further reinforce this conclusion of a strong influence of the electoral rules of the game on the final form of a recovery strategy. This is primarily found in the British cases, and particularly in the case of the Labour Party. In 1983, the Labour Party, as evidenced by party opinion in its own newspaper, was dominated by the left of the party, which strongly identified with a socialist ideology, evidenced by commitments towards nationalisation of large parts of the economy and unilateral nuclear disarmament.[35] The party leader, Neil Kinnock, for all his electoral pragmatism, was a prominent member of the Tribune Group, which had historically been associated with the socialist left of the party, and his leadership campaign

35. Foot, "Manifesto Will Prove Right"; Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim."

papers show that at the start of his leadership, he held fast to his support for left-wing policies such as unilateral nuclear disarmament.[36] For a party in such circumstances to be swayed by the electoral system, the effect must be strong indeed.

As it happens, Labour was swayed. The Kinnock Papers show that the leadership was definitely aware at an early stage of the image problem Labour had and the decline of its working-class base.[37] Following another clobbering at the polls in 1987, not only did the party change course; it did so very blatantly. For a party so dominated by activists attached to its socialist identity as Labour had been (and still was in the eyes of many Conference delegates) to state openly that its Policy Review had to appeal electorally to those who had never supported it is a very strong sign.[38] Further relating it to the electoral system are numerous references in Shadow Cabinet discussions of the need to appeal to areas where Labour was not strong, particularly in the South of the country.[39] The early form of external democratisation extending the franchise to affiliates was another example of how far Labour was prepared to go.[40] The same push to coming to terms with electoral realities can be seen in the case of the Liberal Party, which had to face its inability to win a majority due to the effects of the electoral system (and after 1970 dashed hopes of a recovery, started doing so ever so hesitantly).[41]

Taking into account the mid-cycle change of strategy in the D66 case, the comparative evidence ends up providing sufficient support for proposition 6. The electoral system does seem to constrain the efforts of political parties towards recovery in the expected way. However, the fact that this is clearer in the FPTP cases than in the PR cases does point towards a need for further study, especially where the impact of PR is concerned. One could speculate that because the PR system as it is in force in the Netherlands has little in the way of mechanical and psychological effects, the constraining effect of this system might be weaker than the effect of its British FPTP counterpart, even if there does appear to be some effect. While this first asssessment of the proposition delivers encouraging results, therefore, further research will be required to find out exactly how the impact of PR works to constrain the choices of political parties, leading to a further refinement of the model.

36. Labour, Leader's Office, "Memo to Neil Kinnock on Leadership Campaign Themes," 3.

37. Ibid.

38. Labour Party, National Executive Committee, "Moving Ahead: Statement to Conference 1987" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; L. Whitty, "Policy Review and 'Labour Listens': Note by the General Secretary" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge.

39. N. Kinnock, "Neil Kinnock Address to PLP" (1987), KNNK 2/2/1, the Papers of Neil Kinnock (KNNK), Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge; Labour, NEC, "Moving Ahead"; Labour Party, Parliamentary Labour Party, "Proceedings of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 6 July 1988 at 11.30 AM in Committee Room 14" (1988), Parliamentary Labour Party Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester; Labour Party, Parliamentary Labour Party, "Minutes of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 17 June 1987 at 12.00 Noon in Committee Room 14" (1987), Parliamentary Labour Party Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

40. Labour, TULRG, "Trade Unions and the Labour Party."

41. Liberal Party. Liberal Assembly, "Resolutions adopted at Southport 18th - 22nd September" (1973), 73A, p.15-16, LIBERAL/8/4, Liberal Party Archives, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London, 15-16.

9.3 General validation of the model

Having examined each specific proposition in turn, let us now look at the model as a whole. Does the way parties behave after an electoral shock that arises from the empirical evidence match the terms of the model? This section subjects the model to such a check moving through the various stages step by step. It will start by looking at the 'whether'-stage, then move on to the 'how'-stage, discussing the general idea of the reinforcement and extension strategies, the aggregate nature of the strategies and the sequential impact of internal and external variables in turn.

The first step in the model is what is termed the 'whether'-stage. At this stage, the party considers whether the shock it has suffered is "worth the fuss". As concerns the empirical reality, the step is more an analytical distinction than a proper step in the thinking process of political parties. It is significant, however, that there was an observable debate on the question whether the party had to change anything about itself in the case of the British Labour Party, which did show some hesitation to diagnose the 1983 defeat as a crisis.[42] In the CDA and D66 cases, where recognition of the crisis was instantaneous, the diagnosis of an electoral crisis was contained in an influential evaluation report[43]– one could say, therefore, that there was consensus reasonably fast in those parties. In general, this means the 'whether'-stage, while not as separate from the 'how'-stage as it is in the model, is part of the process in empirical reality.

The bulk of the analysis concerned what the model termed the 'how'-stage. This stage revolves around the choice between two strategies, which in turn give rise to party change of a certain character. In theoretical terms, the model at this stage consists of several parts that must be submitted to validation separately: the concept of the reinforcement and extension strategies, the aggregate nature of these strategies and the distinction between internal variables affecting preference formation and external variables influencing the process later by acting as constraints on those preferences.

The reinforcement and extension strategies were introduced as a typology to structure the diverse array of measures a party can take in a crisis. The central assumption underlying their formulation is that parties have to make up for their lost electoral potential, and that their actions can be classified as either appealing to their core voters (the reinforcement strategy) or to non-core voters (the extension strategy). In practice, each party will often mix elements of both strategies in their response, but various factors impact on the precise composition of the mix of measures.

Do parties think of their actions in such a manner? If the question is whether the parties explicitly referred to the core vote with every change, the answer must of course be no. The parties in this study did not justify all their measures in this way. However, in each case, the question of reinforcing or extending is posed in relation to actions across all dimensions. This is the clearest in the case of the Labour Party, where the second cycle saw an extension strategy that was explicitly targeted at voters who had never

42. Foot, "Manifesto Will Prove Right"; Frayman, "Political Defeat, says Jim"; G. Dunwoody, "Letter to James Mortimer, General Secretary, the Labour Party" (1983), page stamped 000702, National Executive Committee Archives, Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester.

43. Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid"; CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie."

Table 9.11: Identity of defectors

Party	**Previous performance relative to average (year)**	**Shock performance relative to average (year)**	**Expected strategy**	**Observed strategy, first cycle**	**Observed strategy, second cycle**
CDA	+2,9% (1989)	-10,2% (1994)	Extension	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Labour	-4% (1979)	-13,3% (1983)	Reinforcement	Reinforcement	Extension
D66	+4,7% (1981)	-2,1% (1982)	Extension	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Liberals	+2,4% (1966)	+1,3% (1970)	Extension	Extension	Extension

voted Labour (see chapter 6). Even where it was not explicit, the question of the party's relationship to its voters was posed in various ways.

Another matter related to the reinforcement and extension strategies is whether these strategies can actually be thought of as strategies that are uniform on all dimensions. A single glance at table 9.1 above answers this question: this is not the case. Among the four parties under study, a unified reinforcement or extension strategy across all dimensions was the exception rather than the rule. Within the dimensions, too, there was considerable diversity, although uniformly reinforcing or extending strategies on a single dimension did occur more often in chapters 5 through 8.

As a related matter, let us now look at the rival explanation that parties simply gear their strategies to the votes they have to regain, in other words that the identity of defectors matters more than institutional loyalties and electoral constraints. In chapter four, we offered a simple operationalisation of this concept: taking the average of the five last elections not including the shock election itself, we compared the last pre-shock election to this average. If it was below average, the party would already have lost most of its non-core votes, and thus would have predominately lost core votes in the shock election. If it was above average, the party would likely also have lost non-core voters. In the former instance, a strategy purely geared towards the functional consideration of winning back the lost votes would be a reinforcement strategy and in the latter an extension strategy. Since this effect concerns both the initial and the final forms of the strategy, we will consider each of these in turn. However, if the initial strategy does not conform to this expectation already, or at least not as closely as in examining the institutional explanation represented by earlier propositions, then we can conclude the parties' response was likely not so much functional as institutional in nature, in other words: that the party acted according to its institutional heritage rather than pursuing the strategy that would win them back the votes they had lost.

Table 9.11 shows a mixed picture. Only the Liberal Party conforms entirely to the

expectations based on the identity of its defecting voters. Since the shock result remained above average, it is likely that its defectors were mostly non-core voters. The observed extension strategy therefore makes sense. Likewise, the picture of the Labour Party in the first cycle also conforms to expectations in that it started on a reinforcement trajectory, as it had already lost most non-core votes in 1979 and its 1983 result was far below the five-election average. However, its switch to an extension strategy from 1987 onwards confounds the expectations, especially given the fact that the party's modest gains in 1987 (3,2%) did not make up for its losses at all. Meanwhile, both Dutch cases do not behave as one would expect, especially since both parties had evidence available to them in the form of the Gardeniers and Van den Bos reports that non-core voters had a significant part in their shock defeats.[44]

Although the operationalisation is arguably rudimentary and could be improved, on the basis of the archival data it appears that there are better explanations available than one purely based on the identity of the defectors (see section 9.2). The evidence for institutional and electoral influences on the strategy is more compelling than that for a purely functional one, especially if we consider that, as noted in section 9.2.5 above, D66 and Labour also pursued first-cycle strategies on the tactical dimension that run directly counter to the expectations generated based on this proposition. The rival explanation will therefore have to be rejected.

Finally, the discussion should turn to the way in which our model treats internal and external variables. As already noted in chapter three, the distinction is not as crisp as the model would have it. In the evaluation reports of the Gardeniers Commission (CDA) and Van den Bos (D66), naturally external electoral considerations were also brought to the fore.[45] However, the general idea that institutional characteristics of parties in the form of base or ideological attachment impact an initial formation of preferences while external circumstances constrain the party from acting on these preferences finds support in the detailed evidence from the cases. This is clearly seen in the CDA and Labour cases. In either case, the party had at its disposal information suggesting the demographic decline of its core vote, pushing it towards an extension strategy.[46] In both cases, this information finds only limited recognition in the overall strategy for the first electoral cycle outside of the tactical dimension. In addition, in the Labour case, the constraining nature of the FPTP electoral system is made clear by explicit references made to the effects of the system being used as a rationale for the change of strategy in the second electoral cycle.[47] This also appears, to a lesser extent, in the case of the Liberal Party.

In general, therefore, the nuts and bolts of the model appear to be reasonably valid. While some of its workings are necessarily more sharp in the analytical distinctions than

44. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16; Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid."

45. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16; Van den Bos, "Onze mentaliteit en de harde werkelijkheid," 17.

46. CDA, Gardeniers Commission, "Rapport Evaluatiecommissie," 16; Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Female Voters"; Labour, "Report on a Communications Strategy for Young Voters," p. 16.

47. Labour, PLP, "Proceedings of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 6 July 1988 at 11.30 AM in Committee Room 14"; Labour, PLP, "Minutes of the Party Meeting Held on Wednesday 17 June 1987 at 12.00 Noon in Committee Room 14."

they are in empirical reality, one can say that parties generally follow the steps assumed by our model. Most importantly, the identity of the defectors the party lost at a shock election did not prove to be a better explanation than the institutional variables included in the model also showed that this is not the case. The neo-institutionalist premises of the model, therefore, appear to have been a solid foundation upon which the model could be built. Of course there is work to be done - as the examination of the propositions in section 9.2 above shows - but in general, the model appears to be on the right track.

9.4 Concluding remarks

This chapter was intended as a comparative analysis and synthesis of the four cases studied in chapters 5 through 8 of this dissertation. The bulk of the chapter was devoted to examining each of the specific empirical propositions formulated to assess the explanatory power of the model. Having subjected each of these propositions to a comparative empirical assessment, how should the explanatory power of the model formulated in this dissertation be assessed?

As regards to the 'whether'-stage, the expectation derived from the Harmel and Janda model that larger defeats are more likely to lead to a diagnosis of crisis in the form of proposition 1 was confirmed.[48] A learning effect as proposed by proposition 2, however, was not found. Parties do not uniformly seem to be more inclined to diagnose a crisis if they experienced one before. It has to be kept in mind, of course, that all parties under study did diagnose the crisis – but the variety of speeds at which they did so does not seem to be related to a learning effect in the way that it seems to relate to the size of the defeat.

The mainstay of the model, the 'how'-stage, presents a picture that is more complex than the simple propositions 3 (electoral base attachment) and 4 (ideological attachment).When looking at electoral base attachment, D66 is the case that does not follow the pattern. It has to be noted that the party did seem inclined to start on an extension trajectory before the return of Van Mierlo, but if we take the end of the first electoral cycle as the reference point as in all other cases there does not seem to be a simple effect of the kind proposed. Still, the fact that D66 started off with an extension strategy does provide some credence to the proposition. Proposition 4 does not hold up, even without evidence from cases with weak ideological attachment: while all parties have a strong ideological attachment, they do not, in fact, all follow a reinforcement strategy initially. Taking all this into account, we can say that on the whole, there is still a case to be made that electoral base attachment affects strategy choice in the uniform way proposed, while the same cannot be said for ideological attachment.

Proposition 5 and its sub-propositions 5a through 5c, which disaggregate the effects, perform much better. The programmatic and organisational changes in the first electoral cycles line up perfectly with each party's ideological and electoral base attachment, respectively, as proposed in propositions 5a and 5c. Proposition 5c is particularly significant, since it shows that the effect of ideological attachment is limited to programmatic change,

48. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 280.

rather than uniform, as proposed by proposition 4. Proposition 5b, however, performs much worse, and does not seem to show any pattern. Therefore, only propositions 5a and 5c can be confirmed, and the main statement of proposition 5 has to be rejected. This presents a puzzle, since the tactical dimension, being directly about the party's targetting and therefore about thecore vote, should be a prime candidate to be related to electoral base attachment. Possibly, there is some sort of influence of various external factors on the tactical dimension in the first cycle.

Proposition 6 on the effect of the electoral system finds support in the data. All parties move in the expected direction during the second electoral cycle, with the exception of D66, which shows a similar shift in strategy before the end of the first cycle. This shows that the way elections work is as important as foreseen by our model: the way votes translate into seats is crucial. The difference between both cycles also indicates that the conception of the electoral system as a constraining influence that comes in later to impact upon the preferences formed through internal factors is probably correct. Nevertheless, some problems remain, particularly as evidence for this effect in the PR cases is weaker than the evidence arising from the FPTP cases.

Overall, the results present a mixed picture. This is in part due to the complexity of the empirical reality, which accounts for the fact that the fit of the model is, at most, partial. Its best performance, therefore, was not so much in the first tentative tests conducted above but in its performance as a heuristic tool. This is most readily apparent in two areas of our model. The first area is the impact of internal characteristics on the recovery strategy while preferences are being formed. This is apparent even before the differential effects propositions are introduced. Although the overall configuration of the cases does not show a clear picture of a unified effect of electoral base attachment or ideological attachment, in all four cases evidence can be found linking the initial form of the strategy to either of these two variables. When instead of at the strategy as a whole, we look at the component dimensions, the picture becomes clearer. High ideological attachment, present in all four cases, seems to have led to a uniform preference towards a more traditional issue agenda. Likewise, the organisational reform agenda seems to be informed by electoral base attachment. The only exception to this is the tactical area, where the picture is puzzling, but perhaps this is due to an earlier influence of the electoral reality on this dimension.

The impact of this electoral reality presents the second area in which the model has performed well, both in examining of proposition 6 and as a heuristic device. The effect of a First Past the Post electoral system is clearly as predicted, with the archival record in the two British cases providing concrete evidence that the system pushed parties towards an extension strategy by constraining the ways in which they could otherwise recover electorally. The effect of the Proportional Representation system is less clear-cut – in general, it seems to lead to a reinforcement strategy, but crucially, in both Dutch cases the tactical dimension deviates from this overall pattern, showing a tendency to broaden the electorate. It might be that the parties trusted their original base was covered by other means, but this does not leave enough evidence to conclude that there is the same strong effect of the PR system towards the reinforcement strategy as the FPTP system seems to have towards extension.

Of course, our model has to be further improved. This is chiefly the case in further

disentangling the internal factors from eachother. The most crucial problem to resolve in this regard is that the actions taken by parties on the tactical dimension do not match up to the expectations of proposition 5. This presents a puzzle because this should theoretically speaking be the most straightforward link to electoral base attachment of any of the three dimensions. The possibility of some sort of early effect of external conditions might be worth exploring in this regard. In general, however, the model appears a good start towards explaining the different forms party change can take following an external shock. The overall conclusions of this study, and what these contribute to the overall literature, form the focus of the final chapter of this dissertation.

10 Conclusion and discussion

10.1 Introduction

This dissertation sought to address the research question *"how do political parties respond to an external shock in the form of heavy electoral defeat, and why do different parties respond in different ways?"*. As argued in chapter one, this is a theoretically as well as socially important research area. As further elaborated in chapter two, the party change literature suffers from a problem of complex causality: the same cause, changes in the external environment, can lead to a variety of outcomes in the category of party change. Distinguishing between them is important especially where electoral shocks are concerned, since party systems in Western Europe have grown increasingly unstable in recent elections.[1] The theoretical ambition of this dissertation, therefore, has been to develop and empirically examine a new heuristic model as a starting point for building a new theoretical model of shocks and change.

In chapter two of this dissertation, a survey of the state of the art in the literature led to the conclusion that development of the theory on shock-induced change had stalled and would benefit from a new approach. The chapter signalled two major problems: the existing model of Harmel and Janda was being overstretched because it was being used to examine the presence or absence of certain kinds of changes, which it was not designed for.[2] The second was that the literature acted implicitly on a conception of change which was unidirectional, the one direction moving away from the party's origins. This led to puzzles in which certain kinds of changes were expected but not found on the basis of the theory, demonstrating its limitations.[3]

Chapter three set out the terms of a new tentative model, which departs from what the shocks literature *had* successfully demonstrated: that an external shock, by and large, caused parties to change.[4] Electoral shocks were chosen as the focus since they provided the broadest possible "population" for the study by working on parties with all kinds of goals, thus averting the need to "call" a party's primary goal. The point of departure for our model, inspired by works on campaign strategy, is that once electoral potential has been durably compromised in a significant way, parties roughly have two paths available

1. V. Emmanuele and A. Chiaramonte, "Party system volatility, regeneration and de-institutionalization in Western Europe (1945-2015)," *Party Politics* 23, no. 4 (2017): 382-384.

2. R. Harmel and K. Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 3 (1994): 259–287.

3. F. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats During 'Purple Hague', 1994-8," *Party Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 84.

4. Although of course, the theoretical possibility that change would not occur should have been considered, and this was the focus of the discussion of the whether-stage. See chapter 3.

to them.[5] One is to appeal to their core voters (the reinforcement strategy), the other (the extension strategy) is to reach out to non-core voters. These strategies are associated with kinds of changes in the field of electoral tactics, party organisation, programme and ideology. Since an electoral shock initiates a critical juncture in which there is increased scope for change, these changes consist of more fundamental and far-reaching changes than those made in a "normal" electoral strategy.[6] Roughly speaking, the reinforcement strategy represents change towards the party's roots, since this would appeal to those who had previously voted for the party. The extension strategy represents the hitherto prevailing understanding of change away from the party's roots and origins.

In specifying the causal mechanisms described by our model, a historical institutionalist approach was chosen, building mostly upon the critical juncture framework as developed by Collier and Collier and Capoccia and Kelemen.[7] The general mechanism of production by which parties will opt for (elements of) either strategy unfolds in two stages. At the initial stage, preferences are formed based on the party's internal characteristics as institutions, developed over the course of their history. This is expressed in a first set of two factors: electoral base attachment and ideological attachment.

Electoral base attachment in the form of formal or informal institutional rules drives the party towards the reinforcement strategy, while lack of it points to an extension strategy. This is a function of path-dependency as well as electoral arithmetic: the party's history increases the costs of changing away from its past trajectory. A similar argument was presented for ideological attachment. Since parties can be to a lesser or greater extent attached to their ideology, it follows that parties with a higher degree of ideological attachment also have higher costs changing away from their past ideological commitments and practices derived from them. This means the reinforcement strategy will be the preferred strategy of parties more strongly attached to ideology, while the extension strategy will be more likely to be adopted by a party that is more weakly attached. The second set of factors proposed were external influences, which might make either strategy less viable by imposing constraints on the preferences based on the party's institutional characteristics. In particular, majoritarian electoral systems were proposed to push parties towards an extension strategy.

Our model was assessed empirically by means of a comparative research design consisting of four empirical cases of parties suffering an electoral shock: the Dutch Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) between 1994 and 2002, the British Labour Party between 1983 and 1992, the Dutch Democrats 66 (D66) between 1982 and 1989, and finally the British Liberal Party between 1970 and 1974. Using within-case evidence and between-case comparison as evidence, the model was subjected to a first empirical assessment in

5. J. J. M. Van Holsteyn and G. A. Irwin, "CDA, naar voren! Over de veranderende verkiezingsstrategie van het CDA," in *Jaarboek 1987*, ed. R. A. Koole (Groningen: Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen, 1988), 69-70; R. Rohrschneider, "Mobilizing versus chasing: how do parties target voters in election campaigns?," *Electoral Studies* 21, no. 3 (2002): 368.

6. See G. Capoccia and R.D. Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (2007): 348.

7. R. Berins Collier and D. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Capoccia and Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures."

chapters five through nine. Following the synthesis of data from all four cases in chapter nine, there are two areas in which the model shows promise. The first is its description of the initial formation of preferences through the impact of the internal characteristics of the party as an institution. While the picture is still cloudy, it is plausible that electoral base attachment has a strong effect, while the role of ideology is limited to programmatic change. The second is in the way the FPTP electoral system appears to have constrained the actions of the parties in the two British cases, showing a strong influence of the electoral mechanics on the actions of parties.

On the other hand, even in those two areas, the complexity of the causal mechanism still poses puzzles. A major example is the way in which all dimensions except the tactical dimension conform to expectations under proposition 5 (differentiated effect), while this dimension should have the clearest relationship to electoral base attachment on the basis of the theory. This will undoubtedly require further elaboration of the model in future studies. This overall conclusion forms the point of departure for the concluding argument and discussion presented in this final chapter of this dissertation.

The rest of this conclusion and discussion will unfold as follows. In section 10.2.1 below, the question of what the model has taught us about parties under pressure is addressed. In section 10.2.2, focus shifts to the contribution to the debate on party change and party shocks in general. Finally, section 10.2.3 presents a number of suggestions for future research building on the conclusions and contribution of this dissertation.

10.2 Conclusion and discussion

10.2.1 What have we learned?

Having summarised the argument so far, it is now possible to state in more general terms what can be learned from this research. First of all, let us consider the first part of the research question: how do political parties react to an external shock in the form of heavy electoral defeat? Up until now, the state of the debate was that the answer must be "change". However, the sheer diversity of the response in even the limited amount of cases studied in this dissertation has shown that this is too simple. The answer, then, must be qualified and extended: political parties respond to an electoral shock not just through 'change' in general, but through a wide variety of different changes to their tactics, organisation, programme and personal composition.

The breadth of diversity of changes across the cases studied cannot be emphasised enough. While some parties changed in the conventional direction assumed by much of the literature, taking the extension strategy and looking towards newer policy issues, organisational innovations such as external democratisation, a broader electoral base and/or a more diverse slate of candidates, there were others that changed in the opposite direction, empowering their members and playing more to their old loyalties in terms of base and traditional issues. This challenges the one-dimensional nature of party change as an event that occurs when anything about the party is changed from its past nature. In fact, party change has been shown to be a more multi-facetted phenomenon that does not just unfold in multiple areas within the party, but also unfolds in multiple different ways.

In this way, this study has shown that the causal link observed in most of the literature between an external shock and party change is too simple as a representation of what happens to a party after a shock. Rather, it has been demonstrated that underlying this general causal link observed between an external shock like a heavy electoral defeat and party change, there is a causal process determining how a party can change in different ways that is just as relevant as the link itself. It is this causal process that must be studied to distinguish between the multiple forms party change can take and the various ways parties can arrive at those changes.

In fact, there is such a great diversity within the broader category of party change that the concept of the reinforcement and extension strategies, used in a solely aggregate way, cannot fully describe the various configurations of party change arising as a result of an electoral shock. Given the variance encountered in just four cases, it is unlikely that any general unified conceptualisation of some sort of strategy could have done this. In fact, the question is whether this would be necessary: propositions 5a through 5c, which assigned different effects to various internal factors on various parts of the recovery strategy, were considerably more successful in accounting for the complexity and variety in party's reactions to heavy defeat than the ones presupposing a unified effect, although the puzzling deviation of the tactical dimension and the rejection of proposition 5b have to be noted here as well.

A key purpose of the reinforcement-extension distinction was to solve the problem in the literature that change in the direction of a party's origins was sometimes mistaken for continuity. By and large, this distinction has largely managed to solve this problem. This is visible especially in the case of the CDA, the subject of the earlier case study by Duncan which figured prominently in the literature review.[8] The observation made there that there was no change in the programmatic area looks to be the result of a one-dimensional understanding of change. Where Duncan's study could not explain using the existing models why the CDA supposedly maintained programmatic continuity during the 1994-2002 crisis years, the model as applied in chapter five, by allowing for an interpretation that sees the Policy Review as change, manages to provide an explanation for both the organisational changes and the Policy Review by reference to ideological attachment and electoral base attachment. This advantage was also shown in the case of D66, where the adoption of a commitment to referenda actually showed a deepening of the party's commitments to direct democracy that capped off a reinforcement strategy on the programmatic dimension.

There are still problems with the reinforcement-extension distinction. It makes the assumption that parties think of electoral outcomes with every step of their recovery strategy, since all actions of a party are interpreted based on their intended impact on the composition of the party's support base. In fact, though parties occasionally gave electoral reasons for moves in the organisational and programmatic fields, they rarely did so with very explicit reference to certain groups. Where they do so, it can be interpreted as the strongest evidence of electoral calculations on decision-making, as in the case of Labour's references to winning over voters who never voted for the party. However, as a reflection on the basic premise of the two strategies, this does raise the question whether

8. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'."

they actually represent a choice between former supporters and new supporters or signify something broader.

Therefore, while the reinforcement-extension distinction served very well as a heuristic tool and a frame of reference as well as a first step in theorising about the specific actions of parties, perhaps what it represents is better seen as broader than the labels themselves. Originally conceived as a strategy premised on core voters, the reinforcement strategy has also proven a strategy of playing to the party's presumed historic strengths – and resulted in change *towards* a party's roots. The extension strategy, which was conceptualised by thinking about the kinds of actions that might make a party more appealing to non-core voters, has also been shown as a strategy marked by diversifying the party's repertoire – and resulted therefore in the typical change *away* from a party's roots. This conception of the two strategies complements the original conceptualisation in a way that strengthens the model.

Having concluded the discussion of the first part of the research question, the discussion will now turn towards the second part. Why do some parties choose one path to recovery and others another? The answer given by our model is that this is due to a combination of preferences formed as a result of institutional loyalties to the party's base and ideology and constraints imposed by the external environment, particularly the electoral system. This answer appeared to be reasonably accurate, but must perhaps be subjected to one change: which path a party under pressure chooses from among the variety of options available is due to a variety of internal and external factors.

In general, it can be concluded that our model has performed reasonably well in explaining the choices made by parties in light of the internal institutional inclinations of parties and considerations arising from the constraints of the external environment. It is significant that it has performed less well where it overestimated the unified nature of various influences on the actions of parties in crisis. This culminated in a confusing picture trying to compare the outcomes to each other in light of the various configurations of variables, particularly internal factors, under study.

In the four cases studied, our model performs reasonably well in modelling the effects of electoral systems. Going on the evidence from the cases of the Labour Party and the Liberal Party, there remains no doubt that the majoritarian logic of the FPTP electoral system with its districts that make it very important who exactly votes for you was a prominent consideration. In essence, this provides new evidence for the centripetal tendency predicted among others by Downs and in a different form by Kirchheimer's catch-all thesis.[9] Some of the strongest individual pieces of evidence linking certain influences to concrete parts of the recovery strategy were found zooming in on Labour's Policy Review, which was very much informed by the need to perform better in the South and in marginal constituencies.

There is still some ambiguity on the impact of the PR system. While both Dutch parties ended on a reinforcement strategy as predicted, they also started off with one.

9. A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 184; O. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. J. LaPalombara and M. Weiner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 177–201.

This means we were not able to gauge whether this is due to internal or external factors. The lack of concrete evidence of any considerations by decision-makers of the electoral system in choosing which voters to appeal to, which did appear in both FPTP cases, presents a difficulty. However, there is some very limited evidence in the form of the return of Van Mierlo which, in the first electoral cycle between 1982 and 1986, swung D66 around from an early extension to a reinforcement strategy. Since this was motivated in part by the lack of improvement in the opinion polls, there seems to have been some electoral motivation. It is not, however, linked strongly enough to the PR system itself to infer a causal effect from it.

In examining the causal mechanisms, however, a few characteristics of the model find some support in the empirical observations. First of all, in all four cases, where the electoral system impacted, it did so in a relatively uniform manner, across all four dimensions. Second, and more importantly, in all cases the impact of external environments appears to occur largely in line with rational strategic calculations by party decision-makers involving conscious considerations of the extent of a party's appeal and the votes needed to gain a good electoral result. This can be seen in the CDA and D66 cases with the detailed observations of Gardeniers and Van den Bos, in the Liberal case with the reports from various regions, and in the Labour case in the conscious reflection on the need to win over those who had not previously voted for Labour. In many of the cases, there appears to have been detailed empirical evidence on which to base these considerations. This confirms one theoretical premise of the model: that the external environment impacts as an opportunity structure, making for a much more rational and strategic reconsideration of the strategy a party should pursue.

It appears that the general assumption of the model that parties retain a measure of path-dependency was correct as well, despite the complex picture arising from the consideration of the impact of internal factors. Whether in the form of electoral base attachment or ideological attachment, a party's past commitments have been shown to matter in the minds of party decision-makers. In all four cases, it initially was the electoral base attachment and ideological baggage of a party that pushed it in an initial direction. Indeed, these variables proved better at explaining party's recovery strategies than a simple functionalist rival explanation that assumed that parties would tailor their strategies to win back the votes they lost. The presence of information known to the four parties that made their strategies less advisable further shows the strength of this tendency. In the Labour case, for instance, even in the face of studies suggesting the problems with using employment as an issue, the party persisted, because that was ultimately what they perceived their party to be about. In this way, parties show themselves to be path-dependent institutions in optima forma: as the theory stipulated, their actions are informed even after an external shock by structures infused with value that have developed over time. In line with historical institutionalist perspectives, a party is shown to be path-dependent: its past choices at certain critical junctures shape its choices in crisis.

It is unfortunately true that our model offered no way to explain why certain internal factors impacted more than others in certain cases. However, this is in part due to the limits of theory-building: it would require an impossibly detailed theory to model all the various influences towards various specific outcomes. As this dissertation is the first

tentative attempt at such a model, this was perhaps simply beyond its scope. There is little doubt that on balance, electoral base attachment and ideological attachment, or commitments related to them, led to pressures towards either strategy as expected. It has not, however, been proven that the same variable played the deciding role every time.

Even disentangling the various dimensions and examining whether different independent variables impact on different dimensions did not entirely mitigate this problem. The conclusions ultimately lined up on the programmatic and organisational dimension, which is a promising result. However, there remains the vexing matter of the most obvious suspect, a link between base attachment and the tactical dimension, not materialising at all. There is a possibility of mitigating this by weighing in external factors and stating that parties anticipate the effects of electoral systems when operating on this dimension. In fact, evidence in the Labour and CDA cases points towards the fact that evidence of the external environment was part of the judgments that led to particular actions on the tactical dimension.

Various parties also seem to weigh the different internal factors differently. For D66, the ideological attachment to being non-dogmatic was a main driving factor towards the reinforcement strategy they pursued on balance. For Labour and the CDA, it was a mix of both, where ultimately base attachment lined up with ideological attachment, making no difference. For the Liberals, the low degree of base attachment led to extension strategies on the tactical and organisational dimensions and a reinforcement strategy on the programmatic dimension. In the individual chapters, we had to resort to the idiosyncrasies of each party to explain this, such as D66's programmatic basis or the unique links of Labour to the trade unions. However, as the reader might be well aware, idiosyncrasies alone by nature do not suffice for a comparative conclusion that is more generally applicable.

One wonders if there might not be an opportunity for party goals to re-enter the equation. Providing a rigorous way is found to make a reliable a priori call on the importance of these goals, the concept of party goals could potentially be brought back in to explain the different impacts base attachment and ideological attachment have in different parties. To use the example of the D66 case: its goal would be policy (as it is based on its programme). Therefore, as policy is its overriding goal, ideological attachment becomes more important. This would have to be incorporated in a restatement of our model.

What, in conclusion, has this dissertation taught us about parties in crisis, and to what extent? From the first evidence, the main theoretical links involved in our model seem reasonably valid. There definitely seems to be an impact of electoral base attachment and ideological attachment on a party's initial strategy, and it broadly goes in the predicted direction. However, our model has run into the problem of complex causality. It did not succeed in clearly disentangling the impact of the various variables from each other, and therefore still cannot explain the presence or absence of individual concrete changes fully. The same applies to the effect of electoral systems, although it has been more successful here. The British cases reveal a tendency of parties operating under FPTP to adopt the extension strategy, pressured by a system which weighs votes differently. However, there is too little evidence to conclude whether the opposite of a FPTP system, the PR system, has a similar effect in the direction of the reinforcement strategy. If we can

in fact extrapolate these tentative conclusions to parties in general, this has interesting societal implications for the way parties and party systems could develop in the future. Going purely on internal characteristics, electoral volatility would create a sort of self-reinforcing effect where strong attachments to electoral base and ideology get stronger and weak attachments get weaker. This sheds an interesting light on the fragmentation of Western party systems, since it implies that parties will get increasingly "specialised".

This study, therefore, has been reasonably successful in what it set out to do, in both ways inherent in the research question. It has demonstrated that party change occurs in a variety of different forms in different cases. It has also provided a heuristic tool for thinking about the choices parties make when put under pressure, showing that the nature of parties as institutions is a defining influence from the very start. With the caveats expressed above about the extension and reinforcement strategies taken into account, it has provided some basis for further analysis of individual changes made by parties, and pointed in the direction of possible explanations. Further research is required, both on internal and external variables, and incorporating more cases, to further refine it so that it can help reliably interpret what is clearly an increasingly frequent phenomenon: parties suffering from heavy electoral defeats.

10.2.2 Contribution to the debate

Having established this answer to the research question, let us now turn to the significance of these findings to various debates in the literature on political parties. It has already been noted above that the apparent importance of internal characteristics of parties matches to a large extent the characteristics of a historical institutionalist approach.[10] This has, in fact, been the dominant narrative in the shocks literature, which has always seen parties as being resistant to change.[11] In this sense, this dissertation has extended the observation that party change is not something that just happens or must happen.[12] Even when party change happens, it is still shaped by the same patterns of institutional behaviour that also constitute a party's resistance to change. And even when that party change moves away from a party's roots, as in the case of New Labour, these institutional inclinations are still taken into account, as when the importance of trade unions to Labour got a new meaning when the old block vote system was abandoned for direct voting by affiliated members of trade unions.

In its relationship to the shocks literature, this dissertation had two explicit goals: 1) build a heuristic model as a starting point for building a full theoretical model which could contribute to explaining why certain changes originate from shocks and others do not, and 2) build a model which helps to account for change that essentially returns to a party's roots. Both had been shortcomings of the literature, as has been observed in

10. S. D. Krasner, "Sovereignty: An Institutional Perspective," *Comparative Political Studies* 21, no. 1 (1988): 66–94; P. Pierson, "Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (2000): 251–267; Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena.*

11. A. Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power*, trans. from the Italian by M. Silver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1982]); Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change."

12. Ibid., 261.

chapter two. In the first goal, much work still has to be done. Our model, by and large, offers a basis for taking this agenda further. In particular, it has contributed towards both its goals through its institutionalist approach through the influence given to past events and loyalties. In relation to the first goal, it has been shown that through the role played by electoral base attachment and ideological attachment, party choices made in crisis are path-dependent, which explains to a large extent the variety of change encountered in the four cases. As regards the second, the study has found that most cases started off on an old and familiar path, which in most cases amounted to a reinforcement strategy, or change towards the party's roots. It is true that it could not account for all the observed changes. As has been argued above, however, this is now a matter of improving the model using the evidence generated by its use as a heuristic device rather than starting one from scratch once again. It has definitely succeeded at the second goal, as showcased in chapter five by improving on the account of Duncan in the CDA case.[13]

More generally in relation to the "shocks literature", this dissertation returns a prominent role to internal characteristics of the party. Previously, the literature had presumed that the changes that resulted from an external shock were the result of a change in the dominant coalition governing a party after the external shock had discredited the original dominant coalition or of a dominant coalition addressing threats to the party goals.[14] In both understandings of change, party characteristics figured in the form of party goals only in the chain of events leading up to change and determining the likelihood and extent of change, since the concept of goal-oriented change was not very well-developed.[15] It can be easily seen in light of this entire research project how this leads to the problem encountered by Duncan in the form of the absence of programmatic change as he saw it.[16]

By building a model around the institutional characteristics of a party and showing it has a reasonable degree empirical validity, our model has in effect shed new light on the impact of these characteristics beyond the decision to change. The interplay between internal factors and the external shock that has marked the theory since Panebianco's observations on exogenous or endogenous change has been given a new expression in this way.[17] The prominence of previous patterns of behaviour does not stop after a party has suffered a shock; rather, these patterns are reinterpreted and given new expression. The occurrence of an external shock does not make external circumstances and rational vote-seeking considerations dominant all of a sudden, even though in some cases their effect was noticeably strong. An electoral shock does not necessarily produce an electoralist logic that trumps the party's institutional identity, as has been seen in the case of the CDA persevering in its more traditional approach to the crisis even after the 1998 electoral defeat. Rather, a party turns introspective in a crisis, being confronted with the question what exactly it is and who it is for.

This is shown even in the case of New Labour, which is usually understood as a triumph

13. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'."
14. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 244; Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278-279.
15. Harmel and Janda, "An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change," 278-279.
16. Duncan, "'Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same'," 83.
17. Panebianco, *Political Parties*, 242.

of electoralist logic owing to the deep crisis the Labour Party was in.[18] The case study in this dissertation does show the importance of electoral considerations to the birth of New Labour, but it also shows that progress was incremental, amounting to a continuous balancing act between the party's conception of what it was and who it was for and the constraints imposed upon it by the electoral system in light of changing demographics. This was in part due to power dynamics, as the factional battles between the leadership and the influential hard left of the party signify. It was also due to the fact that having been forced to reconsider its essentials, the party was also forced to come to terms with its own past.

If the "shocks literature" is to progress towards a deeper understanding of why parties change in the way they do, it seems it has to shift the balance from seeing parties as organisations shaped by internal power dynamics and the pursuit of their goals to institutions shaped by their past choices and identities as well as these power dynamics and goals. Power dynamics and threats to primary goals might be enough to explain the occurrence of change and the overcoming of resistance to change per se. A path-dependent understanding based on institutional characteristics shaped by a party's history, however, shows promise when it comes to explaining the specifics of change. This is because it extends the understanding of resistance to change to the kinds of changes implemented. A party under pressure is not just in a struggle for power or a quest for its primary goals. It is also continuously in a conversation with its own past, perhaps even more so than during normal competition. It is in this conversation, it appears, that the changes that result from these crises are shaped.

Interestingly, this concept of a balancing act between internal and external pressures is not new to the literature on political parties. Though it does not figure in the party shocks literature as such, it has appeared in various forms in other parts of the literature. Rose and Mackie used it to model the performance of parties and particularly their failure as a function of their success in negotiating this trade-off.[19] The necessity of negotiating these pressures for parties looking to survive also found expression in Bolleyer's structure-leadership dilemma, describing the challenges facing new parties in terms of a trade-off between the demands of developing an internal structure and the leadership's importance in maintaining electoral performance.[20] In both instances, there is a clear link to party survival. That the concept of a trade-off resurfaces from the conclusions of this study on parties under electoral pressure is therefore not entirely surprising. Neither should it be a surprise that the strategies observed in this study, even when leaning in the direction of one strategy, often also contained elements of the opposite strategy. Perhaps the same arguments can be made for parties after electoral shocks as for new parties, which potentially allows us to extend the argument to the reasons why parties survive these shocks.

18. R. Heffernan, *New Labour and Thatcherism: Political Change in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 174, doi:10.1057/9780230598430.

19. R. Rose and T. T. Mackie, "Do parties persist or fail? The big trade-off facing organizations," in *When Parties Fail: Emerging Alternative Organizations*, ed. K. Lawson and P. Merkl (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 534.

20. N. Bolleyer, *New Parties in Old Party Systems: Persistence and Decline in Seventeen Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 52.

Moving on from the shocks literature, the importance of the external environment and the structure of electoral competition also makes a link with the "gradual party change" literature and particularly the party types literature. This started with Duverger who linked the rise of the (socialist) mass party to universal suffrage.[21] Kirchheimer stipulated that parties changed (among others) to accommodate overall changes in the structure of electoral competition in his catch-all thesis.[22] He was followed by Katz and Mair in their cartel thesis.[23] Looking at Kirchheimer's argument, the shedding of ideological baggage by parties to appeal to a broader public has obvious parallels to the extension strategy.

In a way, the conclusions of this research project can be used to shed a new light on the longstanding debates on party types. Koole observed that the debate had become mired in an unfruitful dominant party type versus exceptions narrative.[24] By linking up the idea that party change does not just happen from the "shocks literature" with the idea of responses to the environment, this research project allows us also to comment on the conclusions of the party types literature. The fact, for instance, that parties did not uniformly respond to a shrinking electorate by adopting a broader appeal – some pursuing the reinforcement strategy even though they were aware of the demographic challenges - sheds an interesting light on the catch-all party thesis. If parties are resistant to change, it is evidently the crises that drive home the need to change to respond to the environment. Now it has been shown that even some parties noted to be catch-all in orientation, such as D66 , responded to a crisis in a decidedly non-catch-all way.

This is merely to illustrate the benefits case studies like the ones in this dissertation can have on the debate in the gradual side of the literature. In focusing on the broader macro-level patterns, the literature may avoid the problems with deciding what is and what is not change,[25] but it locks itself into a deterministic pattern that postulates one party type as a dominant form. By looking at parties after an external shock, they can potentially be made to act like test cases that lead to a more sophisticated understanding of party types. In other words: in the future, looking at shocks might point towards reasons why some parties do not conform to the supposed dominant type, leading to a deeper understanding of how parties evolve over time. The occurrence of shocks provide case studies by which the individual characteristics and contexts of parties can be described and linked to party change. Potentially, reintegrating the concept of shock into the more extensive gradual party change literature in this way could help a more sophisticated understanding of the evolution of party types.

21. M. Duverger, *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, trans. from the French by B. North and R. North (London: Methuen, 1954 [1951]), 66.

22. O. Kirchheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," in *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. J. LaPalombara and M. Weiner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 190.

23. R. S. Katz and P. Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: the Emergence of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 1, no. 1 (1995): 13-14.

24. R. A. Koole, "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party," *Party Politics* 2, no. 4 (1996): 520.

25. As formulated in P. Mair, *Party System Change: Approaches and Interpretations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 49.

10.2.3 Avenues for future research

In the previous section, several contributions to the party change literature have been described. First of all, our model has gone beyond the existing theories in the "shock literature" to attempt to explain the specific forms party change can take, and has done so with mixed success. Secondly, also related to the "party shocks" literature, it has introduced a neo-institutionalist perspective to what happens after a shock, in which the party is not just in a power struggle but continues to be shaped by its characteristics as an institution. Thirdly, it presents a case for integrating the concept of shock into the "party types literature", as it allows for a use of focused case studies.

This opens up various avenues for future research. First of all, the model must be refined in order to deal with the problem of varying effects of internal factors like electoral base attachment or ideology that has been described above. Admittedly, it is going to be hard to build a model which accounts for all possible variations, but there is still meaningful progress to be made towards a model that can account for most of them, without making the model more complex than it already is. Future research needs to focus first and foremost on disentangling the various effects of base attachment and ideological attachment from each other. As has been noted, the introduction of party goals into the model might be a good option for further development. By differentiating among the various goals parties can have, it might become possible to model the different impacts of the various internal factors more accurately. The individual agency of leaders such as Kinnock in the Labour case and Van Mierlo in the D66 case might also be subjected to further study and integrated further into the model.

In general, the refinement of the model should go hand in hand with testing the theory in a broader array of cases. It is probably too early for a large-N approach, but adding further electoral systems to the model (or indeed an extra FPTP case to attempt to find further support for the conclusion about its strong impact) can help shed light on the way the conclusion about the effect of the FPTP is to be read. In addition, such an approach potentially increases the certainty with which we can say the conclusions can be generalised – and will therefore only strengthen the model and provide further material for refinement. In this context, the field of inquiry should also be extended to other regions than Western Europe, since there is nothing in the theory underlying our model that cannot be applied to other parts of the world - especially since figure 1.1 suggested that the heavy defeats that have been the subject of this study appear to be a structural feature of politics in many Eastern European democracies.

Once this is done, various avenues are truly open. As has been mentioned, one potential use of the model would be in a case study to shed light on the development of party types. Looking for cases around the time parties presumably developed into catch-all or cartel parties, the approach used in this dissertation could be modified to examine the way in which parties did or did not develop in the direction of the presumed dominant party type at critical junctures in their existence. In doing so, it could help clear up whether a dominant party type actually exists and help develop the typology of political parties.

Ultimately, a well-developed model might be able to branch out into the debate on the success and failure of parties as well, asking the question why some parties brave

a crisis while others diminish or fail. To do so requires the researcher to negotiate a methodological minefield, since it would require a combination of research on electoral behaviour as well as party behaviour. In effect, it would require researchers to ask voters what certain reforms meant for them. This is difficult to study, but using a well-developed typology like the extension and reinforcement strategies and a model of party behaviour, the link could potentially be made.

All in all, however, the aim of this study has been to try to resolve an apparent impasse in the development of theory on party behaviour following a shock, and it is here that it might hope for its most lasting contribution to future research. Electoral shocks certainly are not the only type of shocks that cause parties to change, as Harmel *et al.* observed.[26] It is to be hoped that the way of thinking applied to this study of electoral shocks can be applied to other types of shocks as well, such as dramatic failure to get into a coalition or intense internal strife. This would first and foremost require a clear typology of shocks that allows the research to get concrete, after which much the same avenue can be followed for different kinds of shocks as the one followed in the construction of the theory in this dissertation.

To use the shock of dramatic failure to get into a governing coalition, for example, which would be an "office shock", one might formulate versions of the extension and reinforcement strategies that focus on traditional and new partners. By using the same approach in which internal factors are constrained by external factors, propositions could then be constructed about the impact of both. It would be truly interesting to see if responses to other shocks follow a logic similar to responses to electoral shocks. In effect, this would be a logical theoretical implication of the conclusions presented here, since it has been argued above that what underlies the choices made by parties in crisis is their nature as path-dependent institutions. It would be a challenge to that conclusion if this were found not to apply when parties were put under pressure in a different way.

The circumstances of the political game that parties play are changing. To return to the observation with which the introduction in chapter one started: any scholar of political parties after a shock is likely to be confronted at any social or scholarly gathering with different examples of parties under pressure. The social relevance of the field is increasing, and understanding how parties react when put under pressure is essential to understanding the way in which they work and in which they will develop in the future in the exercise of their important figures. As Mair observed, parties have stayed around because of a remarkable capacity for adaptation.[27] As partisan dealignment continues and the structure of democratic competition changes, so parties will continue to change. As the book is closed on this study, it is to be hoped that it has stimulated a new way to approach this development, and a new approach as to how political parties will change in the future.

26. R. Harmel et al., "Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change: An Empirical Analysis," *West European Politics* 18, no. 1 (1995): 3.
27. Mair, *Party System Change*, 89.

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Acknowledgments

Parties get reshaped under pressure. So do projects and people.

Completing the project I started six years ago has not always been easy. Luckily, on the journey from proposal to defence you meet a lot of people who help out. First, there was professor Ingrid van Biezen, who consented to help me write a proposal. I owe my supervisors Ruud Koole and Maria Spirova a great thank-you for their frank feedback and elephantine patience. Scientifically, the feedback of my colleagues, especially fellow "party person" Nienke Bos, and Prof. Airo Hino and colleagues at the PhD Summer School was also invaluable. Tim Mickler helped me in another major way by helping me learn LateX.

For a PhD student under pressure, the support on the home front is invaluable as well. I would like to thank my family first of all. My mother and father, of course, for their continuing support and hospitality. But also my grandfather, who is sorely missed at the defence. I would like to thank the USKO for all the music and my friends for their friendship. I would also like to thank Severin, Sophie, Marjon and Marjolein for their support in keeping my life moving along and my home liveable. In the same vein, Dr. Yvette Dijkxhoorn deserves credit for providing the same support at work. And sometimes, a new environment helps: I would like to thank the Friars Minor of Megen for their hospitality and their conversation when I needed some peace, quiet and inspiration to write.

I never expected how many nice and helpful people I would meet during my data collection. At the CDA, there's then-party chairman Ruth Peetoom, Jelle Gaemers at the National Archives, my interview respondents from my master thesis, the former executive members who donated their files and Karin Hoentjen, whose belief in my project made it possible to secure access to the archives. For the D66 archives, my thanks go out to Berend de Boer at the DNPP and Jessica Hoogenboom at party HQ. My research on the Labour Party was made possible (and enjoyable) by the staff at the Churchill Archives Centre, as well as Darren Treadwell and his colleagues at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre. Finally, for the Liberal Party I have the staff at the LSE reading room to thank.

Thank you all (even those I didn't mention) for your invaluable support!

Nederlandse Samenvatting

Partijen onder druk: verklaringen voor de keuzes van partijen na een zware verkiezingsnederlaag

Het feit dat partijen onder druk staan is geen nieuw thema in de studie van politieke partijen. Al sinds de jaren 1980 is er een levendig debat gaande in de literatuur over de vraag of de politieke partij als vorm van organisatie in crisis verkeert. De uitdagingen voor politieke partijen worden er niet minder op als gevolg van een toenemende electorale volatiliteit, afnemende ledenaantallen en de opkomst van concurrenten die zeggen tegen het "oude" politieke systeem te zijn. Deze uitdagingen zijn niet nieuw, maar nemen wel in aantal toe. En toch bestaan politieke partijen nog steeds. Volgens politicologen als Peter Mair is dit het gevolg van hun capaciteit om te veranderen. Deze capaciteit om zich aan te passen aan veranderende omstandigheden, specifiek wanneer deze zich uiten als een plotselinge schok, is het onderwerp van deze dissertatie. Anderzijds ziet de literatuur politeke partijen veelal als instituties die als doel hebben om zichzelf in stand te houden. Hierdoor wordt het verklaren van verandering een vraag op zichzelf.

De literatuur pakt het vraagstuk van deze partijverandering op verschillende manieren aan. Enerzijds is er de literatuur die onderzoek doet naar geleidelijke partijverandering, anderzijds literatuur die partijverandering ziet als gevolg van externe schokken. Dit proefschrift plaatst zich nadrukkelijk in het laatstgenoemde genre, omdat deze aanpak als voordeel heeft dat zowel de oorzaak van de verandering als de verandering zelf duidelijk afgebakend zijn. Toch beoogt het een probleem dat in beide genres voorkomt op te lossen, namelijk het probleem van de "zwarte doos". Het is inmiddels vrij duidelijk dat veranderingen in de omgeving tot partijverandering leiden, maar welke vorm deze veranderingen aannemen is minder duidelijk. Dat dit problematisch is blijkt uit het feit dat op grond van de literatuur al te vaak verwacht werd dat een bepaalde verandering zich universeel door zou zetten, terwijl dit empirisch nog maar zeer de vraag is. Er is nog weinig systematisch onderzoek geweest naar de verschillende vormen die deze verandering kan aannemen. De *onderzoeksvraag* die dit proefschrift beoogt te beantwoorden is dan ook tweeledig: hoe reageren politieke partijen op een externe schok in de vorm van een zware verkiezingsnederlaag, en waarom reageren verschillende partijen op verschillende manieren?

Het onderzoek naar partijverandering laat zich ruwweg in twee genres uitsplitsen: de een ziet partijverandering als iets geleidelijks, de ander als het gevolg van plotselinge en heftige "externe schokken". Beide zien echter externe factoren als deel van de oorzaak van partijverandering. Dit is niet vreemd als men zich bedenkt dat partijen in wezen instituties zijn - organisaties die met waarde geladen zijn en waarvan als zodanig het

voortbestaan een prioriteit op zichzelf wordt. Een kenmerk van instituties is dat ze juist een zekere weerstand hebben tegen verandering. Dit maakt het moeilijk verandering te verklaren zonder een externe factor (mede) als oorzaak aan te wijzen. Dit proefschrift volgt deze zienswijze. Het bouwt specifiek voort op het historisch neo-institutionalisme.

Het genre van de geleidelijke partijverandering kenmerkt zich veelal door het concept van partijtypes die elkaar opvolgen als gevolg van ontwikkelingen in de samenleving. Hierbij was met name Duverger zeer invloedrijk. In zijn klassieker *Les Partis Politiques* (1951) stelt hij dat de oude kaderpartijen van notabelen na de invoering van het algemeen kiesrecht concurrentie kregen van de van onderop georganiseerde massapartijen. Volgens Duverger had dit type een aantal voordelen ten opzichte van de kaderpartij en zou dit de oudere partijen dwingen zich eraan aan te passen. Dit concept van partijtypes vinden we ook terug bij Kirchheimer (1966), die betoogde dat de oude massapartijen op hun beurt veranderden in zogenaamde catch-all partijen met minder ideologische baggage en een grotere potentiële achterban, en bij Katz en Mair (1995), die in de jaren negentig de ontwikkeling van een kartelpartij meenden te bespeuren die onder andere partijfinancieringswetten inzette om de concurrentie te beperken. Al deze bijdrages hebben gemeen dat er veelal uit werd afgeleid dat het nieuwe partijtype ook dominant zou worden, maar dit was altijd discutabel. Men kan daarom spreken van een probleem van complexe causaliteit: er is te weinig aandacht voor de vraag waarom een bepaalde groep partijen zich in de ene richting ontwikkelt en een andere in de andere. Hiervoor is een focus op het individuele partijniveau noodzakelijk.

Deze individuele focus vinden we meer in het andere genre, dat zich richt op externe schokken. De Italiaanse politicoloog Panebianco (1988 [1982]) is een eerste belangrijke auteur in dit genre. Hij betoogt onder andere dat partijverandering zowel uit interne als uit externe oorzaken voortkomt: wanneer een schok de bestaande partij-elite in diskrediet brengt, komt er een nieuwe dominante coalitie op die de organisatie verandert. Dit is een machtgebaseerd perspectief. Harmel en Janda (1994) voegen daar nog een doelgebaseerd perspectief aan toe: als het zogenaamde primaire doel (stemmen, politieke ambten, beleid of het maximeren van interne democratie) van een politieke partij in gevaar is zal er ook verandering optreden. Hoewel Harmel en Janda in samenwerking met anderen hun theorie ook kwantitatief hebben geprobeerd te toetsen, is het merendeel van de studies die het model van Harmel en Janda gebruiken kwalitatief van aard in de vorm van case studies naar individuele politieke partijen. Deze gevalstudies verschillen zeer van elkaar in onderwerp en reikwijdte. Sommige auteurs verklaren alleen het optreden van verandering, anderen een specifiek fenomeen zoals het ontstaan van de Conservative Partij van Canada uit twee rechtse partijen. Dit is belangrijk omdat er problemen optreden zodra er specifiek geprobeerd wordt te verklaren waarom bepaalde veranderingen wel en vooral ook niet optreden. Dit is onder andere het geval in een gevalstudie van Duncan (2007) naar het Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA), waarin hij verrast wordt door de afwezigheid van programmatische verandering nadat het bestuurlijk georiënteerde CDA de macht verloor in 1994. Het model van Harmel en Janda is invloedrijk: het blijkt goed te presteren als het gaat om het verklaren van partijverandering. Gevallen zoals die van het CDA laten echter zien dat het model te veel wordt opgerekt: het is niet gemaakt op het verklaren van de aanwezigheid of afwezigheid van bepaalde veranderingen. Dit is opnieuw een probleem

van complexiteit: we weten inmiddels dat partijen veranderen na een schok, maar zijn nog onvoldoende in staat om te verklaren waarom dit verschillende vormen aanneemt.

Het *doel* van deze dissertatie is dan ook een nieuw model van partijverandering na een schok te ontwikkelen dat wel de afwezigheid of aanwezigheid van bepaalde veranderingen kan duiden. Dit tentatieve model wordt in hoofdstuk 3 gepresenteerd en maakt gebruik van begrippen uit het historisch neo-institutionalisme. Electorale schokken veroorzaken een *critical juncture* volgens de definitie van Capoccia en Kelemen: een relatief korte periode (ten opzichte van periodes van padafhankelijkheid waarin de partij stabiel is) waarin actoren meer opties hebben en hun keuzes er daarom meer toe doen. Hierdoor kan een schok potentieel een grotere verandering teweegbrengen dan onder normale omstandigheden mogelijk is (hoewel er geen verandering *hoeft* op te treden). In plaats van een kleine aanpassing van het programma zou een partij in crisis ook kunnen overwegen ideologisch te herijken, bijvoorbeeld.

Voor de definitie van schok volgt het nieuwe model Harmel en Janda: een sterke druk vanuit de omgeving waardoor de doelen van een partij in het geding worden gebracht. Ondanks dat partijen meerdere mogelijke doelen hebben, zijn er in een democratisch bestel stemmen nodig om die te verwezenlijken. Daarom treffen electorale schokken alle partijen, en richten we ons om te beginnen alleen nog op electorale schokken. Deze schokken onderscheiden zich van gewone verkiezingsnederlagen door hun omvang, die zo groot is dat het kiezerspotentieel van de partij mogelijk permanent wordt beschadigd. Als een partij op normale voet zou doorgaan, zou een electorale schok betekenen dat hun kiezerspotentieel permanent verkleind wordt. Voor de afbakening van de populatie van partijen die een schok hebben ondergaan houdt dit onderzoek de vuistregel aan dat bij een electorale schok minimaal een derde van de stemmen of zetels verloren gaan, of dat er andere meer kwalitatieve redenen zijn om aan te nemen dat de partij-elite een schok ervaart, zoals een aanzienlijk verlies in de oppositie.

Na een schok volgt er een besluitvormingsproces dat volgens het model in twee fasen uiteenvalt: de '*of*-fase' en de '*hoe*-fase'. Tijdens de '*of*-fase' staat een partij voor de vraag *of* er iets moet veranderen. In deze fase volgt het model nog grotendeels de bestaande literatuur, die immers vrij succesvol is gebleken bij het verklaren van het optreden van verandering. Zoals ook in de literatuur genoemd treedt verandering op wanneer de druk om te veranderen groter is dan de weerstand van een institutie (in dit geval een partij) tegen verandering. Is die druk groot genoeg, dan volgt een diagnose van crisis. Het diagnostiseren van een crisis is dus afhankelijk van omstandigheden die de weerstand verzwakken en de druk verhogen. Allereerst kunnen we daarom Harmel en Janda volgen en zeggen dat hoe meer de doelen van een partij in gevaar zijn, hoe waarschijnlijker het zal zijn dat een partij een crisis vaststelt. Omdat alle doelen via de stembus moeten worden bereikt, kunnen we dit vertalen naar de omvang van de verkiezingsnederlaag (propositie 1). Daarnaast stelt het model een leereffect voor: als een partij al eerder een nederlaag heeft geleden die groot genoeg was om een schok te zijn, dan zal een partij ook sneller een crisis vaststellen (propositie 2).

Is een crisis vastgesteld, dan belanden we in het hart van het model: de '*hoe*-fase'. Hierbij is de vraag aan de orde *hoe* een partij dan moet veranderen. Zowel machtgebaseerde als doelgebaseerde aanpakken schieten hier tekort. Hier komt het begrip van een

critical juncture als een periode waarin de bandbreedte voor beslissingen ruimer is van pas. Na een electorale schok zoeken partijen een strategie die het kiezerspotentieel weer kan herstellen. Deze strategie is in wezen van eenzelfde aard als de electorale strategieën die partijen volgen bij verkiezingen: een uitruil tussen het mobiliseren van de traditionele achterban en het najagen (*chasing*) van zwevende kiezers. Omdat tijdens een crisis er meer mogelijk is, staan er voor de strategie na een schok (de herstelstrategie) ruimere middelen tot de beschikking van partijen. Bij wijze van analogie met marketing is het zo dat waar een partij in normale omstandigheden alleen de verkoopstrategie aan kan passen, in een crisis het mogelijk is om ook het product te veranderen. De strategieën die gekozen worden in de 'hoe-fase' zijn dan ook een uitruil tussen twee uitersten: een strategie gericht op het kernelectoraat (de *reinforcement strategy* versterkings-strategie) en een gericht op het verbreden naar kiezers die niet tot dit kernelectoraat behoren (de *extension strategy* of verbredingsstrategie).

De middelen die een partij hierbij beschikbaar heeft zijn organisatorische, programmatische en tactische veranderingen in de partij zelf, die gericht zijn op een van deze twee groepen. Organisatorisch kan een partij de invloed van de leden vergroten om de banden met het kernelectoraat aan te halen of verkleinen om meer te kunnen verbreden. Leden verbinden de partij immers met haar kernelectoraat. Op programmatisch gebied kan een partij haar programma en beginselen herzien om aantrekkelijker te worden voor het kernelectoraat (door traditionele waarden meer te belichten) of juist voor een bredere achterban (door er juist minder nadruk op te leggen). Tenslotte kan een partij haar electorale tactieken aanpassen door lange termijnmaatregelen die groepen die wel of niet behoren tot het kernelectoraat meer aan te spreken. Hierbij kunnen doelgroepen, campagneplannen, kandidatenlijsten en symbolen worden aangepast.

Hoe verklaren we de keuze van een partij voor de versterkings- of de verbredingsstrategie? Een partij zal eerst een voorkeur vormen voor een bepaalde strategie. Daarbij speelt mee dat partijen instituties zijn. Hun ontwikkeling is padafhankelijk, wat betekent dat keuzes in het verleden geleid hebben tot bepaalde eigenschappen die met waarde geladen zijn. Dat leidt tot de weerstand om te veranderen die moet worden overwonnen. Het is aannemelijk dat deze padafhankelijkheid zo sterk is dat zelfs een schok hem niet helemaal breekt. Daarom blijven de voorkeuren van een politieke partij voor een van de twee strategieën tenminste deels afhankelijk van de historisch gevormde institutionele eigenschappen. We onderscheiden er twee. Allereerst is er een binding met een bepaalde electorale achterban (*electoral base attachment*). Partijen die door formele of personele banden of informele conventies sterk gehecht zijn aan hun achterban zullen sneller de voorkeur geven aan een versterkingsstrategie omdat die loyaal blijft aan de achterban; waar deze band zwakker is, is het vaak juist aantrekkelijker om voor een verbredingsstrategie te kiezen. Hetzelfde geldt voor de binding aan de ideologie van de partij, omdat veranderingen de ideologie van de partij wellicht onder druk zetten. Niet allebei deze factoren werken evenzeer in op alle verschillende dimensies van de strategie: omdat ideologie dichter bij het partijprogramma ligt, is de verwachting dat de programmatische dimensie meer invloed heeft op deze dimensie dan op de organisatorische en tactische dimensies. Het tegenovergestelde valt te verwachten voor electoral base attachment.

Nadat de voorkeuren op deze manier zijn gevormd door interne eigenschappen, wordt

de externe omgeving van invloed. Het is immers mogelijk dat de voorkeuren van een partij door invloeden uit die omgeving onhaalbaar worden. Er zijn veel factoren die mogelijk van invloed kunnen zijn, zoals het partijstelsel en het gedrag van concurrerende partijen, maar dit proefschrift beperkt zich tot het kiesstelsel. De andere variabelen zijn achtergrondvariabelen die daarnaast deels samenhangen met het kiesstelsel. Het kiesstelsel - de manier waarop stemmen in zetels worden vertaald - is ook de meest voor de hand liggende externe variabele. Het maakt immers uit hoe dat gebeurt. In een meerderheidsstelsel als het Britse kunnen kiezers van het kernelectoraat beperkt worden in hun mogelijkheden om effectief van hun vaste partij af te wijken, omdat ze dan wel in een kiesdistrict moeten wonen waar de andere partij kan winnen. In een evenredigheidsstelsel als het Nederlandse bestaat een dergelijke beperking niet. Daarom zullen partijen in een evenredigheidsstelsel sneller hun achterban proberen te behouden met een versterkingsstrategie, terwijl voor partijen onder een stelsel van relatieve meerderheid in enkelvoudige districten (*First Past the Post*, FPTP) een verbredingsstrategie aantrekkelijker is (propositie 6).

Om het model aan een eerste toets te onderwerpen en te verfijnen werd gebruikt gemaakt van de vergelijkende en *case study*-methodes. Een dergelijke aanpak is namelijk beter geschikt voor het aanpakken van het probleem van de 'zwarte doos' waar de literatuur tot nu toe tegenaan liep dan bijvoorbeeld een kwantitatieve. Vier partijen werden geselecteerd uit de populatie van partijen die een crisis doormaakten: twee in Nederland (een land met een evenredigheidsstelsel), twee in het Verenigd Koninkrijk (een land met FPTP). De partijen werden per land geselecteerd op basis van *electoral base attachment.* In elk land werd een partij geselecteerd die formele of personele banden met het kernelectoraat had en een partij waar deze afwezig waren. Zo kan door deze casussen te vergelijken een eerste toets plaatsvinden van de belangrijkste proposities van het model. Ook leiden de studies van de casussen tot eigen inzichten, die het model verder kunnen helpen verfijnen waar het tekortschiet. Het onderzoek in elke casus werd gedaan door de bestudering van de archiefstukken van belangrijke organen als partijbesturen, partijcongressen en fracties, in een enkel geval uitgebreid met persoonsarchieven van leiders en interviews met betrokkenen. De resultaten van dit onderzoek worden gepresenteerd in een hoofdstuk per partij en vervolgens samengevoegd in een vergelijkend hoofdstuk, alvorens de conclusie wordt getrokken.

Tussen 1994 en 2002 maakt het CDA een crisis door, nadat de partij 20 van haar eerdere 54 zetels in de Tweede Kamer verloor en voor het eerst in haar bestaan weinig kans had om te regeren. Het CDA is een interessante Nederlandse casus omdat de partij na haar ontstaan uit een fusie van drie confessionele partijen daar niet alleen veel personele banden met organisaties uit de achterban aan overheid, maar ook een grote ledenaanhang waar de partij trots op was. Getuige het invloedrijke evaluatierapport van de commissie-Gardeniers uit 1994 zette dit vertrouwen in de achterban door tijdens de crisis. Dit leidde tot de hoge mate van personele en informele *electoral base attachment.* Ditzelfde vertrouwen strekt zich uit tot de ideologie: het CDA is volgens de literatuur ideologischer dan de meeste Europese christendemocratische partijen en ook in de archiefstukken vinden we het belang van begrippen als de antwoordfilosofie en de 'verantwoordelijke samenleving' terug, wat de partij een hoge mate van gehechtheid aan de ideologie geeft.

Op basis van deze twee eigenschappen en het kiesstelsel is de verwachting dat het CDA

twee verkiezingscycli lang een *reinforcement*-strategie volgt: een interessante tegenstelling met wat men zou verwachten gebaseerd op de bestuurlijke oriëntatie van de partij. Over het algemeen blijkt deze verwachting redelijk te kloppen. Al vanaf het begin van het proces met het rapport-Gardeniers zet het CDA opvallend genoeg in op een versterking van de eigen ideologische grondslag en meer ledenbetrokkenheid, hetgeen overeenkomt met de verwachtingen. Dit leidde onder andere tot het invloedrijke Strategish Beraad waarmee de partij probeerde haar ideologie hernieuwd toe te passen op de vraagstukken van de jaren '90 en de invoering van een stelsel van *One Member, One Vote* (OMOV) bij de verkiezing van de partijvoorzitter en in het partijcongres. Het is opvallend dat het CDA op tactisch gebied juist lijkt te willen verbreden naar onder anderen andersgelovigen, al ging dit niet zonder weerstand vanuit delen van de achterban. Hoewel ook een Seniorenberaad werd opgezet om de ouderen (een belangrijke groep) meer bij de partij te betrekken, werd er naast verschillende initiatieven voor andersgelovigen ook ingezet op het aanspreken van jongere en meer stedelijke kiezers. Dit gaat juist tegen de verwachting in. Dat zou kunnen liggen aan het besef van een krimpend kernelectoraat dat we zien in het rapport-Gardeniers. Deze externe druk zou de voorkeur voor *reinforcement* op dit gebied kunnen hebben overstemd.

De Britse Labour-partij tussen 1983 en 1992 vormt op meerdere manieren een klassieke casus. De transformatie die de partij doormaakt tussen 1983 en 1997 van een uitgesproken linkse partij naar het gematigde *New Labour* van Tony Blair is een typisch geval van vergaande partijverandering na een schok. Ook is de partij één van de duidelijkste gevallen van formele binding met de achterban: de partij komt voort uit de vakbeweging en de vakbonden hebben op alle niveaus van de partij vertegenwoordiging en inspraak, wat leidt tot een hoge mate van *electoral base attachment*. In 1983 maakte Labour een traumatische nederlaag door, waarbij de partij weliswaar maar een vijfde van haar zetels en een kwart van haar stemmen verloor, maar dit verlies wel leed na vier jaar oppositievoeren. Dat wordt vaak toegeschreven aan de linkse koers van de partij, die ontstond nadat in de jaren zeventig een verschuiving van de macht van de overwegend gematigde fractie en partijleiding naar de overwegend linkse lokale afdelingen van de partij had plaatsgevonden. Deze tendens werd nog versterkt door een afsplitsing van enkele prominente leden op de rechtervleugel van de partij, die de Sociaal-Democratische Partij vormden. Hoewel de literatuur over het algemeen oordeelt dat Labour pragmatisch omging met haar socialistische ideologie, zorgde de positie van de linkervleugel er in de jaren tachtig voor dat de partij toch een hoge mate van hechting aan de ideologie vertoont. Impopulaire standpunten als eenzijdige nucleaire ontwapening en grootschalige nationalisering werden stug vastgehouden.

Na de verkiezing van de linkse parlementariër Neil Kinnock als leider in 1983 gebeurt er aanvankelijk wat op basis van de interne eigenschappen kan worden verwacht. Labour houdt vast aan haar eerdere standpunten over kernwapens en zet in op traditionele thema's als de gezondheidszorg, de sociale zekerheid en de rechten van de vakbeweging. Ook voert de partij na veel discussie een democratisering door waarbij lokale afdelingen hun parlementaire kandidaten niet meer laten kiezen door het bestuur, maar door een combinatie van stemmen uit lokale vakbonden en gewone partijleden. Opvallend genoeg spreekt uit de stukken van Kinnock's persoonlijke archief een besef dat Labour een ima-

goprobleem had. Op het terrein waar de partijleiding het meeste invloed had, de tactische dimensie, is juist voor een verbredende strategie gekozen. Het logo werd onder andere veranderd in een rode roos, waarbij expliciet werd verwezen naar het vermijden van 'extreme' connotaties. Nadat de partij in 1987 maar een zeer beperkte winst boekt, zien we het beeld radicaal veranderen. Het partijbestuur van Labour komt met een verklaring aan het congres waarin gewaarschuwd wordt dat als Labour geen stemmen wint in het overwegend Conservatieve zuiden (en buiten haar achterban), de partij nooit meer een verkiezing zal winnen. Het beeld verandert hierna radicaal en de partij streeft op alle vlakken een verbredingsstrategie na. Het partijprogramma wordt radicaal vernieuwd met als expliciet doel om kiezers buiten het kernelectoraat aan te spreken. Ook wordt het stelsel voor kandidaatstelling opnieuw aangepast, waarbij niet-partijleden in de vakbeweging persoonlijk mogen stemmen. Dat veel van deze maatregelen genomen werden met expliciete verwijzing naar winst buiten het kernelectoraat geeft sterke steun aan het idee dat FPTP de versterkingsstrategie beperkt en de verbredingsstrategie juist aantrekkelijker maakt.

Democraten '66 (D66), dat in 1982 voor de tweede keer in haar korte bestaan een zware nederlaag moest verwerken nadat het een jaar daarvoor nog glansrijk 17 zetels won, is interessant omdat de partij anders dan de voorgaande twee partijen juist een lage mate van *electoral base attachment* vertoont. De partij is opgericht om de verzuilde politiek in Nederland te doorbreken en keert zich tegen het stelsel van belangenpartijen: de partij vindt dat kiezers op basis van programma moeten kiezen en wil hierin het goede voorbeeld geven. In tegenstelling tot de Nederlandse partijen die uit de verzuiling voortkwamen heeft D66 dan ook geen groot kernelectoraat en in zekere zin wil de partij dat ook niet. Wel is de partij paradoxaal genoeg zeer gehecht aan de eigen ideologie, die bestaat uit een afkeer van dogmatiek en ideologie. Het doel om het partijenstelsel te laten 'ontploffen' en de politiek te vernieuwen blijkt zeer sterk aangehangen te worden, zelfs als het de partij een nadeel geeft ten opzichte van concurrenten. Zo hechtte de partij zeer aan het voor de verkiezingen uitspreken van een coalitievoorkeur door de leden, zelfs al was dit een nadeel in de onderhandelingen. Uit een evaluatie van de nederlaag van 1982 van de hand van vice-voorzitter Bob van den Bos blijkt dat de partij zich goed besefte dat bepaalde kenmerken nadelig waren, maar er desondanks niet geheel afstand van wilde doen.

De reactie van D66 op de nederlaag van 1982 lijkt in het begin grotendeels een verbredingsstrategie te volgen. De partij produceert een 'Democratisch Manifest' waarin de opvatting van democratisering wordt verbreed van staatkundige democratisering tot democratisering in de gehele samenleving, en vergroot de coördinatiemogelijkheden van het bestuur in de soms chaotische op OMOV gebaseerde interne organisatie van de partij, onder andere door het bestuur in staat te stellen bij de poststemming voor de kandidatenlijst een stemadvies te geven aan de leden. In het begin zien we alleen op de tactische dimensie een versterkingsstrategie, waarbij de stemmen in dezelfde hoek gezocht worden als voorheen en de jongerenorganisatie van de veelal door jongere kiezers gesteunde partij wordt versterkt. De peilingen blijven echter tegenvallen, en de partij besluit oprichter Hans van Mierlo terug te halen als partijleider. Van Mierlo wordt zeer geassocieerd met de politieke vernieuwingsagenda van de partij en zijn 'ontploffingstheorie', en dat is dan ook meteen merkbaar: de partij gaat juist meer inzetten op deze traditionele D66-issues,

waardoor in 1986 met een overwegend op versterking gebaseerde strategie een overwinning wordt behaald. Vervolgens gaat de partij tussen 1986 en 1989 grotendeels door op de ingeslagen weg. Hoewel het beeld in deze casus complex is en op meerdere plekken tegen de verwachting ingaat, vallen een aantal dingen op. De programmatische basis van de partij is zo sterk dat die opmerkelijk genoeg een sterkere invloed lijkt te hebben dan de zwakke hechting met de achterban. Daarnaast lijkt het erop dat de terugkeer van Van Mierlo en de gevolgen daarvan wel degelijk het verwachte effect van een evenredigheidsstelsel laat zien.

De naoorlogse geschiedenis van de Britse Liberale Partij is er een van grote moeilijkheden. De partij was aanvankelijk een van de twee grote partijen in het Verenigde Koninkrijk, maar werd na de opkomst van Labour gemarginaliseerd. In 1950 stortte de kiezersaanhang dramatisch in, waarna de partij zich in de marge moest herpakken. Ook de Liberalen hebben een lage mate van *electoral base attachment*. Net als D66 mist de partij uitgebreide formele of personele banden met de achterban en pleit haar individualisme eerder tegen het cultiveren van een vaste aanhang. Daar komt nog bij dat na de electorale instorting van de partij haar aanhang geografisch weinig geconcentreerd was en vaak fungeerde als een proteststem voor ontevreden kiezers van de grote partijen. Dit komt de ontwikkeling van een vaste achterban ook niet ten goede. De marginale positie leidt daarentegen wel tot een sterke gehechtheid aan de ideologie. Opvallend genoeg waren de meeste Liberalen ervan overtuigd dat de doorbraak van hun ideologie nabij was en was hun ideologie een grote motiverende factor. Daarnaast werden nieuwe ideeën zoals het sterk lokalistische *community politics* aan het erfgoed van de partij toegevoegd, waar de Liberalen zeer aan vasthielden. Tot slot blijkt de hechting aan de ideologie aan een aanhoudende weigering om samenwerking met de Conservatieven of Labour te overwegen: het doel was steeds een Liberale meerderheidsregering, hoe onrealistisch ook.

De bestudeerde schok is de nederlaag van de Liberalen in 1970. Na een heropleving in de jaren zestig kampten de Liberalen onder hun nieuwe leider Jeremy Thorpe met grote uitdagingen zoals een slechte financiële situatie em de overname van onderscheidende programmapunten door de grote partijen. Het stemmenaantal van de partij daalde slechts met 1%, maar de partij verloor zes van haar twaalf zetels in het Lagerhuis. Het optimisme over een aanstaande Liberale overwinning werd de kop ingedrukt. De Liberale reactie kwam wat langzaam op gang, waarschijnlijk omdat het beperkte stemmenverlies de situatie ambigu maakte. De strategie die de partij vervolgens volgde bestond uit een versterkte coördinerende rol voor de landelijke organisatie, een sterke focus op traditionele Liberale issues en waarden waarbij voornamelijk werd ingezet op *community politics,* en maatregelen om de aanhang te verbreden. In het kader van dat laatste is het opmerkelijk dat de partij langzaam maar zeker opschoof richting samenwerking met andere partijen, een ontwikkeling die zich later verder zou doorzetten. De herstelstrategie van de Liberale Partij in de twee verkiezingscycli tussen 1970 en 1974, met organisatorische en tactische verbredingsstrategieën en een programmatische versterkingsstrategie, laat daarbij sterke steun zien voor propositie 5, omdat deze strategieën per dimensie overeenkomen met de verwachtingen op basis van de hoge mate van *electoral base attachment* en de lage mate van gehechtheid aan de ideologie.

De vergelijkende analyse in hoofdstuk 9 laat wisselende prestaties van het model zien.

Veelal blijkt het empirische beeld complexer in elkaar te zitten dan het model voorstelt. Wat de 'of-fase' betreft moet opgemerkt worden dat hoewel alle partijen uiteindelijk een crisis vaststelden, de Liberalen en Labour de ernstigheid van de situatie iets minder snel leken te onderkennen. De op de eerdere literatuur gebaseerde propositie 1 dat grotere verliezen leiden tot verandering lijkt te kloppen, hoewel de afwezigheid van gevallen waarin geen verandering optrad betekent dat deze toets slechts tentatief kan zijn. Een leereffect van eerdere schokken zoals in propositie 2 werd echter niet gevonden, omdat de partijen die al eerder een schok ondergingen niet de twee partijen waren die snel reageerden.

Voor wat betreft de 'hoe-fase', de eigenlijke kern van het model valt allereerst op dat het beeld complexer is dan de eenduidige verwachtingen van proposities 3 (*electoral base attachment*) en 4 (*ideologie*). Deze vergelijking vindt plaats op basis van de eerste cyclus, omdat de beschreven effecten immers via de voorkeuren van partijen werken. Er is geen enkele partij die over alle dimensies dezelfde strategie volgde, maar zelfs als we ons baseren op de meerderheid van de dimensies om de strategie te duiden zijn er problemen. Zo volgt D66 in het begin wel de verwachting van een verbredingsstrategie, maar slaat dit binnen de eerste cyclus nog om nadat Van Mierlo terugkeert. Het feit dat D66 op deze manier begon (net als overigens de andere partijen) geeft alsnog enige steun aan de propositie, maar het effect is bij lange na niet zo simpel als voorgesteld. Zelfs zonder gevallen met een lage mate van gehechtheid aan de ideologie (een gevolg van de casusselectie) komt propositie 4 niet door de vergelijkende toets heen: hoewel alle vier de partijen dezelfde hoge mate van gehechtheid hebben, volgen ze immers niet alle vier dezelfde strategie. Het model presteert beter als we de dimensies los van elkaar zien: de organisatorische en programmatische dimensies komen een op een overeen met de verwachtingen gebaseerd op respectievelijk *electoral base attachment* en gehechtheid aan de ideologie. De tactische dimensie echter vreemd genoeg niet, terwijl de attitude ten opzichte van de electorale achterban vrij direct zou moeten samenhangen met de keuze van aangesproken groepen. Uit de gevalstudies lijkt het erop dat verschillende externe factoren mogelijk alvast een effect hebben gehad op de tactische dimensie in de eerste cyclus. Het model presteert ook goed voor wat betreft propositie 6 over het kiesstelsel: het verbredende effect van FPTP komt sterk naar voren uit de twee Britse casussen, en ook voor het effect van een evenredigheidsstelsel is steun, hoewel dat effect waarschijnlijk minder sterk is dan gedacht.

Over het algemeen zijn we dichter bij een oplossing gekomen, hoewel we er nog niet zijn. Dat blijkt ook uit een extra toets waarbij het institutionele model tegenover een simpel alternatief model werd gezet waarin niet de institutionele kenmerken en het kiesstelsel, maar de vraag of de afgevallen kiezers overwegend al dan niet tot het kernelectoraat behoorden centraal stond. Het institutionalistische model dat in deze dissertatie is uitgewerkt blijkt in deze toets beter te zijn in het verklaren van de strategieën van politieke partijen dan dit alternatieve model. Partijen laten zich dus blijkbaar in hun keuzes na een zware verkiezingsnederlaag meer leiden door hun geschiedenis en hun institutionele karakter dan door de identiteit van de kiezers die de partij verlaten hebben.

Het onderzoek heeft dus geleid tot een aantal nieuwe inzichten op het gebied van partijverandering. Allereerst wordt door de diversiteit van de reacties tussen en binnen dimensies in de verschillende partijen bevestigd dat de opvatting van partijverandering in de literatuur tot dusver te simpel is geweest. Partijverandering is een diverse catego-

rie aan maatregelen en verschillende partijen pakken het op verschillende manieren aan. Het onderzoek laat zien dat onder het simpele verband tussen schok en verandering een complex causaal proces zit dat net zo belangrijk is als dat verband zelf. Overigens bleek ook dat de twee strategieën die in dit onderzoek zijn geconceptualiseerd ook niet perfect passen. Het onderscheid laat echter wel goed zien dat partijverandering niet alleen kan leiden tot verandering weg van de wortels van een partij, maar ook tot een verandering die meer in de lijn ligt van de historische ontwikkeling.

Voor wat het verklarende deel van de onderzoeksvraag betreft heeft het model, zoals hierboven reeds aangegeven, goed gepresteerd. Het lijkt er inderdaad op dat een schok de path-dependency van politieke partijen niet geheel wegneemt, maar eerder verzwakt. Het proces van partijverandering onder schok is dan ook niet alleen een machtsstrijd of een streven naar een bepaald doel, maar ook een continu gesprek met het eigen verleden. Ook op het gebied van het kiesstelsel presteert het model zoals gezegd goed. Dat neemt niet weg dat er nog problemen zijn. Ironisch genoeg loopt het model in zekere zin tegen hetzelfde probleem van complexe causaliteit aan als de literatuur. Het model is er bijvoorbeeld niet in geslaagd te verklaren waarom verschillende partijen verschillende factoren anders lijken te wegen. Dit was onder andere het geval bij D66, waar ideologie een veel grotere rol speelde dan *electoral base attachment*. Het zou kunnen dat het doel van een partij (bij D66 kan men zeggen dat dit beleid is) toch een grotere rol speelt. Verder onderzoek is dus nodig om het model verder te verfijnen. Een institutionalistische aanpak kan echter zeker helpen om de veranderingen van politieke partijen in een steeds volatieler wordende electorale omgeving beter te begrijpen.

Curriculum Vitae

Martijn van Nijnanten (1991, Leiden) followed pre-university education at the *Stedelijk Gymnasium Leiden* between 2003 and 2009. While completing his pre-university education, he got his first taste of academia by participating in Leiden University's Pre-University College programme between 2007 and 2009. He studied Political Science at Leiden University while also participating in the Honours College of the Faculty of Social Sciences, obtaining his BSc Degree in Political Science (2012) *cum laude*. Additionally, his bachelor thesis on consensual politics in island states was shortlisted for the J. van den Berg Bachelor thesis award in 2012. While enrolled in the Research Master in Political Science and Public Administration at the same University between 2012 and 2014, he served as a student-assistant on various research projects. Immediately after obtaining his MSc degree *cum laude* in 2014, Martijn was appointed to a position as a PhD candidate at the Institute of Political Science of the same university, which he held until the end of 2018. Since March 2019, he has been employed as a trainee policy advisor with the Dutch Employee Insurance Agency (UWV). He has been a member of the Christian Democratic Appeal since 2008.